





51133/B

E. XVIII 2



*Richard Strachey,*  
ASHWICK GROVE.



*Faint, illegible text, possibly a name or title, appearing below the coat of arms.*





PART II

Portugal.

HISTORICAL AND MEDICAL

BY WILLIAM THOMAS.

LONDON:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY THE AUTHOR,

AT THE SIGN OF THE LION, IN THE STRAND.

1832.







# MEMOIRS

OF

Portugal,

HISTORICAL AND MEDICAL.

---

By WILLIAM THOMAS,

FORMERLY ONE OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL STAFF IN THAT  
COUNTRY.

---

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

*By E. Rayer, Harvey's Buildings, Strand.*

---

1819.



69911

Portugal

HISTORICAL AND MEDICAL

BY WILLIAM THOMAS

OF THE MEDICAL STAFF OF THE ARMY

LONDON

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR

At the end of the volume

1871





# DEDICATION.

---

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

*Lord William Carr Beresford,*

FIELD-MARSHAL, &c. &c.

---

MY LORD,

THE character of a people may be better estimated by their conduct in adversity, and their real dispositions more correctly ascertained at that period, than at any other.

The probity, patriotism, and valour, which they then exhibit, may be considered as natural and unsophisticated.

Portugal, the nation to which the following Memoirs relate, had experienced, in common with other powers, the effects of those inordinate and unprincipled measures which the common enemy were so successfully pursuing, and which she was unable singly to resist.

That ambitious and insatiable enemy which would have annihilated her, had likewise anticipated the overthrow of every existing Government in Europe, that dared to oppose her will.

Great Britain herself was menaced, but this country, fearless of her own situation, with undaunted courage, stepped forward to stem the torrent of this threatened devastation, and became her Ally, at a time, when her Prince had been forced to expatriate himself, as the only



means to preserve his fidelity to his people, who were now left defenceless, except by her British Ally, when you, my Lord, was appointed to re-animate them, and conduct them through the long and severe ordeal they were doomed to experience, and which, under your Lordship's auspicious conduct, prepared them for future conquests.

You my Lord, who must be so intimately acquainted with their political opinions, can best appreciate their worth; and are undoubtedly the only person to whom any work of this kind, could with propriety, be dedicated.

These Memoirs, my Lord, do not pretend to shew the many signal acts of personal heroism which marked the glory of those times, nor do they presume, cir-

cumstantially, to describe those wonderful conflicts and events which ultimately decided the fate of this part of the Peninsula : they have already been given to the public, in indelible language, by the illustrious Commander in Chief, who alone could do them justice.

The object of these Memoirs is chiefly directed, to the Medical Department of the Portuguese Army, the whole of which you have so successfully organized and raised to that perfect state in which they had been acknowledged equal to that of their Ally.

Yet humble as this part of the subject may appear, it was important ; and from the imperfect state of this department demanded the most consummate skill and address to manage, which your Lordship contrived to effect, without alarming the



great body of learned men, whose jealousy might have been naturally awakened for their professional character, by the introduction of those foreign aids, which were employed amongst them: but above all these particulars, which must be acknowledged to have been of some moment, the end was attained by your Lordship, without infringing upon the established laws of that country, and thereby the good faith of the British nation was sustained and preserved inviolable.

These considerations, though undoubtedly of a minor nature, redound no less to your Lordship's honor, but are overlooked amongst the grander objects which then excited the public admiration.

Like the representation of a large picture, designed to portray some great and

wonderful event, the minor objects are by the skillful artist so contrived within the scale, that they should not be the first to attract the eye, nor divert the admiration from the grand design ; but by degrees they are discovered, when they not only become great ornaments, but are necessary to complete the whole.

There are some parts of these Memoirs which have of necessity sprung out of the nature of the subject, to which it may be supposed your Lordship cannot be in the least interested ; but, as they are intended for the advancement of medical science, and, it is presumed, may be for the good of mankind in general, I shall not offer any apology for their insertion, being well assured, that whatever may tend to so good a purpose, will have your Lordship's concurrence ; and they cannot be introduced to



the public with greater felicity than under the sanction of a dedication to which your Lordship's name is affixed.

I cannot conclude without earnestly expressing my wishes, that your Lordship may long continue the ornament of those high honors which you have so laudably acquired, and enjoy with pride and satisfaction the encreasing prosperity of Portugal; which, under favor of Great Britain, and in conjunction with one of the most illustrious conquerors this country could ever boast of, have been so gloriously achieved.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect and admiration,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Humble Servant,

W. THOMAS.





## INTRODUCTION.

---

PORTUGAL, geographically considered, forms only a part of that Peninsula, of which Spain is the other.

The Lusitani, from whom the Portuguese have been so desirous of establishing their origin, are, by their historians, traced so far back as from Tubal, the immediate descendant of Noah; they might at once have told us they were from Adam, and thereby silenced further enquiry.

That they were people of great antiquity will not be disputed, but to what end they can wish to dive into these patriarchal times, the history of which must be chimerical, and involved in great obscurity, and which it seems impossible to trace with any prospect of certainty, and can only be for the purpose of gratifying a useless vanity, by endeavouring to persuade them-

selves they are of greater antiquity than their Peninsula neighbours, and thus establishing an origin independent of them; who, though bound to them by similarity of customs and language, and who, after having undergone with them, those various revolutions, which their contiguous situation had alike subjected them to, and after having been under their dominion, are unwilling to yield to them any superiority.

Their historians have not indeed informed us what kind of people the Lusitani originally were, whether they excelled particularly in any of the arts which were rising, or had flourished amongst the people from the eastern world; nor are we made acquainted how long the name of Lusitani was retained by them, after the Portuguese obtained the country. Whether this happened by conquest or spoilage, a mode of acquirement not altogether unlikely to have happened in those early and primitive days, but from the very small comparative space which they were supposed to have possessed, it was unlikely that they could make themselves very conspicuous.

It is probable they might have acquired a knowledge of different languages, at this time extant, as likewise of the arts, and have inculcated

them amongst the people with whom they were living in intercourse.

The Arabic, the Hebrew, and the Greek languages, are said to have been spoken and were acquired by them, as the different tribes of nations scattered themselves over the earth; and this part of the world, it appears, was overspread with many, and they, no doubt, adopted the different languages, as well as the different arts and sciences which were known and practised amongst them.

The Portuguese in their early times, are said to have been particularly skilled in astronomy, a science which they were supposed to have studied under the Arabians, and which, probably, first excited in them that early desire for navigation, and afterwards encouraged them in those wide extended enterprises by sea, which shewed to what great perfection they had brought this art. The Greeks were most likely their tutors in this art, for they were known to have excelled in it beyond all other navigators of the times: but skilful as the Greeks were, they had confined themselves to the coast; indeed their ships were not calculated to encounter expeditions far from



land; the first nautical enterprise of any magnitude, and which astonished the world, were from the Spanish coast, under Columbus, who took his course westward; and, about the same time, the Portuguese, who took an eastern course, where they succeeded in establishing those settlements which are still retained by them.

It may be difficult to trace, with any certainty, the steps by which the country progressively arrived to that state of civiliaztion, in which it had been known by modern Europe; but it may be supposed, surrounded as they were by different nations, skilled in the different arts and sciences, and the various learning of these times, that these people must have acquired from each something to recommend themselves: from some they might have been improved in the learned languages, by others in the different arts and sciences, as they flourished.

From each they may be supposed to have acquired some useful knowledge, though they did not excel equally in all the known arts or sciences of the times, in architecture, for instance, though the Greeks were known to surpass all that had gone before them, yet they did not seem to excite

in the Portuguese any emulation, nor did they attempt to copy any of those exquisite models, for which the former were so justly celebrated.

The remotest specimens of architecture which appear in this country, are from the Moors or Saracens, both originally descendants from Arabia, and who were, at times, in possession of this country, until supplanted by the Greeks, or the Romans, and who likewise severally over-ran the Peninsula both in Spain and Portugal.

These rude and Gothic specimens of architecture, exhibit no great taste, and appertain merely to strength, and were evidently designed only to protect themselves from an enemy that might assail them; and which, after all, did not secure them in their possession, for they were driven from them by the Romans, so much more skilled in the art of war than they were, and whose excellence in all the arts and sciences far surpassed what these rude but powerful people could pretend to.

From the Romans, under whose all-powerful arms, Portugal was long held in subjection, much might have been acquired; for, with them, the arts and sciences conspicuously flourished where-

ever they went ; and in this country, the specimens of architecture which they left, are evidences of the perfection to which they had arrived : but arts, such as these, did not seem to be the taste of the Portuguese for they scarcely seemed to take advantage of what these people had left behind them, or took pains to preserve what was afterwards the admiration of all Europe.

Their aqueducts, their bridges, and other structures, which still proclaim how superior they were when they had possession of this country ; but the Portuguese did not seem to profit by them, nor have they attempted to extend these arts beyond what these ingenious people had accomplished.

Still after all these revolutions which the Portuguese experienced from the different nations, they contrived to keep their own ground, and to maintain a certain degree of independence ; rather aiming to acquire new possessions remote from their native country, than by attempting to encroach upon those of their neighbours, by whom indeed they were frequently forced to arms, to prevent themselves from falling under Spanish authority, or to rid themselves of it after they had imposed it upon them.



Between the thirteenth and fourteenth century, the art of war was altogether changed by the improvements which science had brought to light, and which was certainly to the advantage of civilized Europe over the rude and barbarous customs of those nations which had suffered themselves to remain in their own natural ignorance, but still continued to interrupt and molest the more peaceable and civilized community, whenever they felt themselves able to take any advantage.

The crusade, or croisade, had presented a new system of things over Europe, and to Portugal in particular, who, though she had no army to join in this holy league, entered very cordially into it, and permitted France to send her legions, who successfully engaged the Infidels, and finally cleared Portugal from them, and even followed them into Africa.

Portugal, being thus freed from these powerful despoilers of the human race, began to take measures for establishing her own independance, and securing to themselves a monarchical succession, which had hitherto been disputed, and claimed by the Castilians, but having no army which was able to resist them with any success, had been

obliged to submit to the pretensions of their Castilian neighbours \* ; and, taking advantage of the army which France had sent to them, with the design of promoting the Christian cause, they were enabled to assert their right to nominate a king of their own, and to establish that right, which they did in the house of Braganza ; and which succession has remained to them, although several parties had asserted their claims, which chiefly rested on intermarriages with different foreigners ; but the Portuguese were determined to be governed by none who were not born amongst them ; and the grandees of Portugal finally settled this regulation of succession to the crown.

To maintain their fundamental laws, it became necessary to pay more attention to their army, which had been grievously neglected, but having no people of their own who had distinguished themselves as generals, and who had at all excelled in this line, they were under the necessity of employing a foreigner ; for which purpose Frederic Count of Schemberg, was invited over

---

\* Hence arose that rooted antipathy between these people, which neither time, nor any fortuitous circumstance amongst them has been able to obliterate, although the cause has long since ceased to exist.

to discipline their army, and instruct them in the new tactics of war, who likewise brought over with him a certain number of officers to assist in the undertaking; and this able and experienced commander, with the Portuguese troops he had trained, beat the Castilians in several battles, which convinced them, that Portugal was not that easy conquest she had been, and that, as she had asserted her independance, she had likewise now found out the means of maintaining it.

Though France had not openly interfered with them, yet seemed to have a presumptive right to offer her opinions, as well as to assist them in the modern art of war; which Portugal, whether from policy, or from a sense of her inability to deny them, seemed to favor, although she was evidently assisting Great Britain all she could with her trade, until those democratic principles, which shook Europe to its foundation, burst forth and exposed her insidious principles—but, at the same time, evinced Great Britain's sound policy and good faith, when she advanced their good Ally, in the most needful season.

---





# MEMOIRS,

&c. &c.

---

IT was after the battle and treaty of Vimeira, when the French army was obliged to quit the Peninsula of Portugal, which they attempted to do with the ill-gotten wealth with which they had loaded themselves, as they passed through the country; and had, in the language of the day, attempted to *fraternise* themselves; and in which they would doubtless have succeeded after their usual manner had not the British army interposed and released them from those fraternal hugs, and frustrated their good and great intentions.

It was too after the memorable battle of Talavera, when Lord Wellington again disengaged



and separated these humiliated people from their ferocious embrace.

The British army had retired from the scene of action at Talavera, and had encamped at Elvas, for the purpose of being nearer the capital, from which their succour could be drawn with greater facility, and their sick and wounded transported to the hospitals; the former of which, after a short time had become very numerous, and the hospitals prepared for them in Lisbon, by the Surgeon-General, were crowded with them.

His Excellency, Marshall Beresford, was at this time engaged in collecting and organizing the Portuguese army, which, from the forlorn state of the country, had fallen into that dispondency which rendered its future services hopeless, until the whole of it could be organized upon principles such as the existing circumstances of the country demanded.

The proud and prominent feature which Portugal was now beginning to assume, through the wisdom of the British councils and the prowess of her armies, attracted the attention, and, in a certain degree, involved the interests of Europe in the event: and those brave but humiliated

people, by not disdaining to imitate, proved themselves worthy, both in patriotism and valour, of the example the British had set before them \*.

By the victories at Vimiera and Talavera, the country had been in a certain degree liberated ; and, by those victorious events, the dreadful blow which the French had aimed at their independance, had been successfully parried.

The British army had now time to pause in quietude, and to wait for those aids, which were expected to join them. Marshal Beresford had likewise breathing time, to recruit and organize the native corps, to rouse them from that state of apathy into which the whole army had fallen, and to revive in them that native valour for which all Europe had given them credit, and which they

---

\* This period was probably the most critical in the whole Peninsula war; the events which had as yet taken place, were flattering to the allied army, and gave early presage of a prosperous termination; they were sufficient to re-animate the expiring patriotism of the suffering country, and enough had already been done to rouse the desponding and to turn the wavering ; but as yet the snake was "*only scotched, not killed*;" the preparations were only commencing for that final conflict which was to determine the future fate of Portugal.

possessed in an eminent degree, and nothing but the severest fatality a nation could fall under, and which had happened to them, could ever extinguish.

Every thing which can memorize these great and awful events, connected with the military exploits of that country, must prove interesting; especially to our own countrymen, who so liberally and virtuously sacrificed to those events, which cannot be recorded without increasing their fame, and spreading additional laurels over their armies.

The task allotted to his Excellency Marshal Beresford, was indeed an arduous one, and required all the combined energies which that General possesses, as well as every aid which could be mustered to his assistance.

Every one at all conversant with the forming and organizing regiments, even in this country, must allow the difficulties to be surmounted are great; but in this instance, the habits to be laid aside, and the prejudices to be overcome, must have alarmed any one who had not the fullest conviction in his own mind of the possibility of success, and whose prudence and foresight in the



execution of the design were not on all occasions ready.

British officers were permitted to volunteer into this service, who were attached to the regiments and brigades, according to their rank, as the Marshal thought expedient, and the Marshal's own staff, were composed of officers, whose talents shewed them equal to the arduous service they were engaged in.

The Medical Department was as yet untouched, and demanded the particular attention of his Excellency, having, like others, degenerated from that celebrity, which it had, in more prosperous times, been known to flourish.

I am warranted in this conclusion by reverting to that excellent "code of regulations" by which the Medical Department was governed in time of peace as well as war; regulations which would do honor to any country wherever first instituted\*, and might well be referred to, by any nation that may be exposed to the calamities inseparable from warfare.

---

\* Said to be originally a copy from the French, with modifications.

This code of regulations, which are here referred to, had been sanctioned by the Government, and amply provides every necessary for the civil as well as military community ; the resources for which were defrayed entirely by grants from the Royal Exchequer. In times of peace these hospitals were chiefly occupied by the needy and helpless civilians, but in times of war, they were by their laws, ordained to be the receptacles for the sick and wounded soldiers ; a regulation they had then to learn was incompatible, and in practice, proved alike detrimental to both parties, and occasioned that insurmountable confusion in their hospitals, when the British Medical Staff first entered upon their mission amongst them.

Practitioners, who had been educated in the established principles of medical science, either in their Universities or in the more private circles of education, had formerly been employed in this army, and the excellent code of laws, which had been approved, and had received the sanction of Government, shews that their Medical Department had been formed on the most approved principles, and if infortuitous circumstances had not forced a deviation from them, their institution were equally calculated for the advantage of their army as our own.

In the summer of 1809, the Medical Board in London were engaged in selecting surgeons from their establishment, for the purpose of aiding the Portuguese army, under his Excellency Marshal Beresford.

Overtures were first made to the regimental-surgeons, and the rank of staff-surgeon held out to them, as an inducement to volunteer their services ; but, whether these officers considered the change from the service, where they had already gained such respectable rank, and where they were duly appreciated, and their duty well understood, or for whatever reason it might be, the Medical Board gained no proselytes to their scheme, and they were under the necessity of descending to the assistant-surgeons, with offers to volunteer into that service.

The offers held out to them was temporary rank of staff-surgeons in Portugal only, to be eligible to the rank of regimental-surgeon in the British service, or to have half-pay as such on retirement if not employed.

Volunteers were soon found from this rank of the Medical Department ; and about the latter end of the summer the Gazzette announced a few



of these officers as staff-surgeons in the Portuguese service only. They were given to understand, that they were required to superintend the native hospitals of the army in that country, and by their assistance, to inculcate the principles on which the British army hospitals were formed, and to appropriate them as nearly as possible, and place them on the same footing.

An inspector \* was selected to preside over the whole intended establishment, and who was to form such arrangements as should be necessary to accomplish the design. With these instructions, the few who had been gazetted were embarked, and landed at Lisbon early in October of the same year.

It is not improbable but the Medical Board in England had, with their usual alacrity, collected and sent out the officers on the first intimation of the design to them, and before the Marshal, whose

---

\* Sir James Mc Gregor, the present Director-General, was the first intended for that duty, but unfortunately for the staff, who had embarked on this service, and indeed for the design altogether, his appointment did not take place: his great and superior abilities being reserved for him to display in a more extensive field.

great and important engagements at that time occupied his attention, could make the necessary arrangements for receiving them, and preparing the heads of the Medical Department in Lisbon, for the alteration he felt it necessary to adopt in that department.

The plan certainly did not appear sufficiently matured for immediately employing the staff-surgeons, and they consequently remained inactive, until the Marshal, with his accustomed propriety, could bring them forward, without offending the Council of the Regency, or the body of professional men, who might immediately feel themselves concerned.

Not that the Council could consider such interference beyond what they had already sanctioned, by permitting British officers to act in the other departments of the army; nor could the profession, with propriety, suppose that any disparagement was meant to their abilities, but conclude it only as a part of that general system which had been adopted, and which the state of the country had unfortunately rendered necessary for their future safety.

Nothing could shew more forcibly the pure and

patriotic motives by which the British were actuated, than the cautious manner in which the Marshal directed the management of this humble though necessary department; and with what sagacity he had entered into their feelings, which, if not consulted, might have been irritated; and thus, from small causes, an embarrassment created which might have greatly impeded the endeavours to place the country of Portugal, in that state of freedom, in which it had been acknowledged, and to which they had, undoubtedly, such just pretensions.

The Medical Officers who had arrived from England, had no cause to be dissatisfied with the apparant neglect and inattention paid to them at the time, since it gave them a full opportunity to insinuate themselves into the customs, habits, and even the constitutions of the people, with whom they were hereafter to consider themselves perfectly acquainted; and to the philosophic mind, the country itself, and Lisbon, the capital of it, presented so many objects for inquiry, that very few travellers could boast of the opportunity which presented, or find leisure to ruminate upon them.

There were very few native troops in Lisbon at



this time, nor no native hospitals for their sick nearer than St. Ubes, on the south-side of that river, which was at too great a distance to admit of much intercourse, or from which, therefore, but little information could be obtained. There were two hospitals formed for the reception of the sick of the British army, which were sent down from Elvas: they consisted likewise of the wounded from Talavera, which were not yet recovered; and these were certainly in the first style of neatness and perfection, and brought to recollection an observation once made by a General, when inspecting an hospital at home—"that such an hospital made a soldier long to be sick."

The troops at Elvas were become very sickly, and, independent of the lingering cases from Talavera, required that hospitable refuge, which the Surgeon-General had provided for them; and what could alone re-animate a British soldier more than to find, that whether at home or in a foreign land, after the battle of the day, he had every succour and assistance which his commander could procure him.

" The wheather now, and through October, continued beautifully fine, but it was intensely hot at

mid-day ; for the rains had not began, and the steep ascents through the city fatigued a stranger much, and checked his ardour for inquiry. The mornings were damp and cold, and in the evenings the fogs, especially in the lower part of the city, near the Tagus, very great, and seemed as ill-calculated for the consumptive or asthmatic, as the banks of the Thames in England ; but this observation may apply to cities and large towns in general, as unavoidably collecting effluvia, which destroy the natural and wholesome elasticity of the atmosphere, which renders the climate of this Peninsula so desirable.

It is not, therefore, to the capital of Lisbon that the consumptive or asthmatic can repair with any prospect of ameliorating their sufferings, but on the heights above, westward of that city, the atmosphere preserves its salutary state ; and there are, in the different villages and quintâ of that direction, accommodations very suitable for such valetudinarians, and where, if climate can effect their purpose, they may confidently hope to re-establish their health.

These situations are far enough removed from the city, and the wind which sweep the great western Atlantic, render the air extremely soft

and salubrious; and a more desirable spot cannot be chosen for pulmonic sufferers, nor indeed for valetudinarians of all descriptions, with render constitutions susceptible to changes of atmosphere.

Through this Peninsula, so deservedly celebrated for the purity of its air, and the salubrity of the climate altogether, seems to preclude the natives from those pulmonic affections, which in England, prove such great scourges and the cause of so great mortality; it does not appear that with this great advantage, that the natives, in general, are remarkable for longevity; there are not so many instances upon record of extraordinary ages in any class of community amongst them, and even among their mendicants, which are in Lisbon pretty numerous, there are observed very few old people amongst them; they are for the most part middle aged; such whose appearances, either from real disease, or the habits of pauperism, are become decrepid, and brought to that miserable state, which gives them the appearance of premature old age.

Mendicity in this country is very generally practised, and the number of people so occupied, amount to a very large class of the population of



the country; who if not discouraged by legislative authority, or absolutely forbid, are so far tolerated that they follow their practice very openly in every street, and near the churches, and in the porticos of them they collect in numbers, imploring alms from every passenger, and vehemently calling on their Saint, in a manner which cannot but disgust a stranger to their ceremonies, and rather give him an idea of fanaticism, which though it may call forth and excite his pity, does not seem to give that spring to his compassion which a more silent sufferer would naturally excite in him.

Whether the alms thus publicly collected within the precincts of their churches, as well as such as are collected by the different order of mendicant priests, who appear to be constantly engaged in these charitable offices, are brought into one general account for the maintenance of the poor, and from the fund thus collected, the indigent are supported, is a very rational consideration; and if so, must reconcile the custom to strangers, however obnoxious to their feelings, and excuses the practice of mendicity, (in this country at least).

The natives are generally very much given to

charity, and are very hospitable to strangers, to the practice of which virtue they are constantly exhorted by their priesthood, who very seldom meet with a denial.

Consumptions, asthmas, and pulmonic affections in general, very seldom occur in this country, the reason for which cannot be altogether attributed to the settled, pure, and soft atmosphere which prevails; even in Lisbon, a crowded capital, loaded with all those obnoxious particles which vitiate the air, and are supposed to create and lay the foundation for these complaints, where they abound, *yet*, even in this capital, pulmonic diseases do not prevail: some other reasons must be assigned for this exemption from those fatal maladies, which proves so destructive in our own country; and which, when once confirmed, find only a temporary relief from the change of that climate to this more settled and salubrious one.

Habit, custom, and mode of living altogether, which are so very different in Portugal, and which form so material a contrast to our own, and in every class of society, seem to be the great causes of exemption from these maladies; by rendering their constitutions less disposed to receive and be

acted upon by those causes, which we may suppose are invariably necessary to the forming of diseases.

The spare yet nutritious articles of food which this country produces in vast variety, and with which the natives seem perfectly satisfied, are more congenial to the Portuguese constitution, than the more gross heavy provisions which the English are accustomed to require, and which render their digestion laborious; and, although it may strengthen the constitution and make him hardy, necessarily requires great exercise and laborious exertion of body and mind, to counteract and prevent the accumulation of bodily disease, and by creating inordinate passions, and other attendant misfortunes, which are too often observed to blemish the English character.

The markets in Lisbon are amply supplied with vegetables of every description, and with which the country so luxuriantly abound: it is surprising to see to what an extent Nature seems to have carried her productions, and how human art and industry are invited to strengthen her intentions, and add to the comfort and aggrandizement of the whole: here every thing appears spontaneously to flourish; and here human ideas of in-



dustry seem to flag, instead of being inspired and excited to greater exertion.

The luxuriant vegetation of this country seems almost sufficient to satisfy the unsophisticated palate of the natives.

From the coast round Lisbon the inhabitants are supplied with fish \* of almost every description, in their season ; and, wherever a Portuguese can procure them his wants seem satisfied.

Though the country every where produces the fowl, and the turkey, yet they are not generally sought after by the inhabitants, and seem rather brought into the markets to satisfy the calls of the stranger ; and indeed, from the scarcity of grain

---

\* The produce of the Tagus, and the sea which it opens into, are enough to satisfy the nicest palate with fish, such as in England are esteemed and sought after as the greatest luxury, and at very reasonable prices. The officers of the army, in passing through Lisbon, found this, and from the great demand at that time enhanced the value of the market very considerably. The price to the natives were very moderate, and the expression of surprise, which were uttered by the stranger whom curiosity led to the market, soon attracted notice, and which no doubt was taken advantage of.

and the manner in which they are reared, they are but indifferent food ; and are generally boiled into broths for the purpose of the sick.

The market abound with game, and wild fowl of different sorts : but the same observation may be applied to them, for they are dry and void of flavour, and by the natives held in no great estimation : the kid is a desirable food in this country, which from the extensive range they have to breed them in, and the hog for the same reason, may be called a wild animal ; for during the summer months they range the olive groves, which are very extensive, and they fatten upon the olives which fall from the trees, and in the cold and rainy season prove the best as well as the most wholesome of all which the country produces, though to an English palate, the meat has a flavour which prevents it been generally approved. This animal proves otherways useful, for thus fed, from the fat of it is made the mondego or butter of the country, which is the best they have ; and indeed, there is no other, except what they receive from England or Ireland ; and that which is produced for general consumption is so bad, that comparatively, their own is by far the best.

The carne or butcher's meat is very little sought

after, for in Portugal the oxen are only held in estimation as beast of burthen, or for the service they are of under the yoke; and the sheep are of so poor and of so lean a kind, that shew they are quite unnecessary, and disgust rather than excite to hunger; and when they are slaughtered by the natives, they were so badly managed, that they became quite appalling, so much so, that what was used by the British troops, were, for the most part, prepared by their soldiers, accustomed to the business in their own country; and whose cleanliness and nicety of management altogether, recommended even an indifferent assortment.

This parsimonious mode of living, and abstinence from that variety of food which produces redundancy in the constitution, may unquestionably be accounted why the natives of Portugal are so little liable to inflammatory diseases, and we may naturally infer from it, that where little attention is paid to these particulars, that the contrary effects will be generated, especially when further excited by a climate, which favor and brings forward inflammatory diseases; affection of the stomach, which precede consumption, are generally the most rapid; and the most rigid abstinence, especially from animal food, becomes



absolutely necessary ; but though such forbearance may prevent these diseases, and to a certain degree, arrest their progress when formed, it is seldom found to be more than a palliative ; and probably, when the stomach has once acquired a diseased action, and the secretions have become vitiated, it may be out of the power of art to restore them to that healthy state on which the soundness of the constitution must depend \*.

Although the natives of Portugal are, in a great degree, exempt from consumption, and other pulmonic affections, such as in England are a great scourge, and destroy so many of the population ; and although the Portuguese may justly boast the superiority of their climate, and the very rare and valuable productions it produces, and with which they abound, and may certainly challenge the whole world for the excellencies produced in the country, yet they are not without their peculiarities to arrest their comfort, and which physically place them upon a common footing with the rest of mankind.

---

\* Consumptions from these causes are those which require and bare bleeding to a great excess, and are generally found in such as have enjoyed health in youth, with a strong and vigorous constitution.

Cutaneous diseases are very prevalent in this country, and to a very inveterate degree ; and so are scrophulous affections, which ulcerate the skin, and disfigure their persons much—indeed to such an extent is this malady, that it was generally observed that there was very few families who had not got some taint of it : from a superficial sight of the objects which every where presented themselves, it might have been supposed that it partook of another more inveterate species of contamination, having a mixture of *lues*, which probably was sometimes the case ; the method established for prevention and cure have been long since acknowledged by us, in the famed Lisbon diet drink, which is certainly peculiarly calculated to answer in their constitutions, which seem easily acted upon by medicine, and assisted by the climate, may be capable of overcoming very inveterate diseases\*.

---

\* The same observation may be applied to diseases of South America, from which the sarsaparilla, the great ingredient of the Lisbon diet drink, is brought ; which was once thought to possess properties far beyond its reality. In England, though the virtues of it did not amount to what it was supposed, it is still acknowledged to be a great assistant to the established specific ; and if brought into aid, can-

Lord Wellington had been some time expected to visit Lisbon, and accordingly about the middle of October he arrived, for the purpose of arranging measures with Marshal Beresford, as well as to assist in the Council of Regency.

Every preparation was made for his reception, and on the day in which he was expected, what troops were in Lisbon, were drawn out; and the Council likewise, with their state carriages, assembled early in the morning in Blackhorse-square, the place by far the most suitable for receiving his Lordship. His Lordship and suite were embarked a few miles from Lisbon, in one of the royal barges, which had been stationed for that purpose, with a very excellent band of music, which greatly contributed to the gala; and was very gratifying to the great concourse of people that had assembled to cheer and congratulate his Lordship on the occasion. On landing from the barge, his Lordship was welcomed by his Excellency Field-Marshal Beresford and the Council,

---

not be too generally prescribed to counteract the baneful effects of mercury, and to assimilate it to constitutions, which without it, it would be impossible to use with safety.



who politely invited his Lordship to enter one of the state carriages ; but his Lordship declined that honor, and instantly mounted a charger, and accompanied the Marshal round the square to take a view of the troops which were stationed there ; they were not very numerous, but the most conspicuous was a body of yeomanry cavalry, which greatly excited his Lordship's attention, which could not be wondered at, for they were a body of very fine men, extremely well clothed and accoutred, and the horses selected for them gave them a very martial appearance, which was certainly very creditable to the Commander, Marshal Beresford, who had brought them to such a state of perfection, and if one might judge from the countenance of Lord Wellington, which certainly was finely animated, and portrayed the greatest pleasure and satisfaction on this memorable occasion.

After taking this cursory view of the troops, his Lordship was conducted by Marshal Beresford, escorted by this body of cavalry, which was to be his body-guard during his stay at Lisbon, through the city to the heights of Balem, where a superb house\* was prepared for the reception of him an

---

\* This mansion had been one of the royal palaces, was very extensive, and for situation was surpassed by none near

the staff which accompanied him, and was well calculated to receive the numerous officers, and others to whom his Lordship might have occasion to give audience; and here the Council of the State the next morning paid their respects to him in form.

In a political point of view, this timely visit of his Lordship to Lisbon, was at this period of the greatest consequence to the community at large, independent of the state affairs with which it was necessarily combined.

His presence excited a general impulse through the city, as if the prelude to some great events, which were to stamp their future security, and confirm them in that peaceful state from which they had so long been estranged.

If any opinion could be formed from the numerous sail which floated on the Tagus, the busy scenes observed on the quays, and the bustle which appeared in the commercial parts of the city, it might be presumed that commerce was fast reviving, and that confidence was, in a great measure, restored amongst the inhabitants.

---

Lisbon : it was, previously to Lord Wellington's arrival, the residence of Signor Bondeno, who resigned for this purpose.

Places of amusement were again opened to the public, the most certain indication that the mind was beginning to relax from those austere and alarming notions, which had banished all those softer passions, which held society together.

The natives are much inclined to music, and the females are very generally taught it, as a pastime to fill up those vacant hours which their solitary customs render heavy: some of them may be esteemed great proficient, and these are fond of displaying their talents for the amusement and admiration of strangers.

The Italian opera was, before the departure of the Prince Regent to the Brazils, kept up in tolerable style; the Theatre itself is a very superb building, the inside spacious and elegantly fitted up: the Regent's box, in the centre of the Theatre, has a very magnificent appearance, and when lighted up must have been equal to any in our own country; but the Italian company was very much fallen off, and the emoluments far from recompensing them, or enabling them to provide any great variety in their performances.

There was likewise a national theatre, north-east of the city, which was much better attended;



the approach to it was bad, and surrounded by low and very poor buildings in the antient style. The Theatre itself is spacious, and fitted up in tolerable style ; there was some good comic acting, and their ballet dancing was very superior, which seemed to be much more adapted to the present taste of the audience, which generally frequented it, than the more finished and classical comedies and farces of the country. They were accustomed to get up ballets, the allusions of which were taken from the actions fought, and the victories obtained, in the different parts of their own country, illustrative of native heroism, and the forbearance of the victorious commanders. Lord Wellington, as well as Marshal Beresford, did not disdain now and then to countenance these patriotic and warlike performances, and they have frequently been noticed patiently witnessing scenes, which they formerly had been the chiefs to effect ; but such condescension had its use with the community\*.

---

\* One evening during the performance at these theatres, the shock of an earthquake was felt, and that to so great a degree at the national theatre, that the audience, one and all, rushed out of it ; but it did not the least damage, and was confined to a very small space, for it was not perceived in the slightest degree at the opera house, nor was it known there until the per-

Justice seemed likewise to have resumed its authority in the civil department, and the Regency found it necessary to revert to the laws of the country, to stop the crime of forgery, which had been some time practised to a very alarming degree, but by the vigilance of the magistracy, the fact had been traced, and three culprits were ordered for execution; the principal detected was a Spaniard, and two were natives of the country. Acts of this kind, though necessary, are so shocking to the feelings, that one generally turns from them with horror; but as this was in a foreign country, curiosity was more particularly excited to witness a ceremony which was described as so different from those which take place in England.

A stage was erected in the most frequented square the night before the execution. At noon on the following day the criminals were brought out on foot, from the prison of the inquisition,

---

formance was over, though this theatre is remarkably situated in the midst of those awful ruins, which were left after that dreadful catastrophe in 1755; and as they still appear to the spectator, without any attempt having been made to alter them, being probably left thus as a more lasting memorial of that awful event, which no human design has ventured to efface.

they were attended by a number of priests, surrounded by the officers of justice, the executioner and his assistant, and guarded by the posse comitatus of the city, who conducted them to the square prepared for the execution. Three or four of the priest assended the stage, and the Spaniard followed, who prostrated himself but was immediately taken up by the priest, and seated on one of the stools. The executioner directly began the ceremony by pinioning him to the seat, with cords passed round his limbs ; the priests then seemed to enter into some conversation with him, and apparently exhorting him to the confession of the crime he had been guilty of, the avowal of his accomplices, and extent of the design, and no doubt occasionally exhorting him to repentance. They continued thus engaged some time, when the executioner again resumed his office, and another cord was passed strongly round his body, which fixed him to the post behind him ; this finished, the priests again began their exhortations, who indeed seemed very earnest in their endeavours, and thus another space of time was spent in their admonitions, when they again desisted, and gave room to the executioner, who passed another ligature round his waist up to his breast ; this seemed to exhaust him much, and must from the tightness have so compressed the lungs and inter-



rupted the circulation, that had they stopped now, death must have very soon ensued. But the holy bretheren had not yet done with him, they renewed their efforts, but the poor wretch had so little power to converse with them, that the priests were obliged to put their ears close to him, to catch any thing that he might offer to say to them. Again the *executioner* proceeded in his operation, which consisted in passing another, or extending the same, cord over the whole breast, which really seemed to extinguish life altogether, but by the continued attention of the confessor, it was conjectured some sparks of life yet remained, and very feint indeed must they have been by this time, for the poor creature seemed to the spectators quite exhausted, and insensible to every thing, even to the still persisting labours of the confessor, who continued patiently waiting to catch the expiring breath, which might bear with it some satisfactory tokens of their anxious assiduity. Although this protracted ceremony continued near an hour, all was silent, but did not apparently excite in the great multitude those symptoms of horror, or any of those sudden or quick sensations of feeling which are heard when a criminal dies by a quicker and more sudden stroke of justice.

It was to be hoped the victim had breathed his last, but the executioner had yet another part reserved, and which, if it had been the first, might probably have answered all the purpose. The cord was extended to his neck ; and after waiting a very short time, a stick, which had been included in the noose, whether by signal given him or not, was suddenly and strongly twisted round, and, to a certainty, completely finished the work.

The priest instantly departed, and the body was untied and taken from the spot, and laid upon the floor of the stage ; when a second criminal, who had all this time been a witness to the last scene, was assisted up the stage, and instantly placed on the seat prepared for him : the same ceremony took place precisely ; but as this criminal was only a secondary in the crime, little seemed to be expected from any confession of his, the execution was expeditiously concluded ; and so was that of the third, who had been waiting the execution of the two first.

As they were state prisoners, their bodies were, agreeably to the custom of the country, to be consigned to the flames : fuel had been placed under the stage for that purpose, and every thing

being ready, a light was put to it, when the posse comitatus, who had surrounded the stage, suddenly turned round, and without any caution to the multitude, galloped through them to their great terror and surprise : the confusion was great, and threatened to add a few more sacrifices either by riding over them or the pressure of the croud to avoid it; luckily no accident happened.

In the mean while, the fire was consuming the stage and the three victims; which, when finished, the ashes were swept together and thrown into the Tagus, which runs immediately on the lower side of the square.

Arts and sciences, trades and the fashions of them, do not prosper or arrive at perfection in an equal degree in all countries; the changes in them are progressive, and necessarily gradual in the completion; these again depend on eventual circumstances, that seem to controul the action, as some are founded on necessity, others are brought forward by the taste or fancy of the people, and at length established into custom.

In the early part of the last century, the roads in England were bad, and in many parts almost



impassable; the mode of travelling at that time corresponded, and the carriages were heavy, and built rather for safety than elegance; the horses were suitable to them, and they moved very little faster than a broad-wheel waggon does now; but as the roads were improved, the means of travelling became less irksome, a new race of horses were encouraged, the carriages were lightened, and expedition was sought for, as soon as safety was established through the country.

The carriages in Portugal have certainly the most cumbersome and unwieldy appearance, but the steep and rugged ascents they are calculated to pass, account for the necessity of such strong built carriages, for safety as well as use: if those of a more modern form (such as are exhibited in England) were to be transported hither, and drove over these stupendous and irregular heights, and sudden windings, which are met with in the streets of Lisbon, the many over-turns, breakdowns, and crushes which might ensue, would soon teach those hardy enough to venture in them, that before such fashionable conveyances could be adopted in Lisbon, the streets must be first new modelled, and the roads round the city, and through the country, must be in a correspondent improvement to receive them.

The mule is certainly the best calculated for draught, as well as to carry burdens here, in Portugal; they are extremely patient and tractable, especially with the expert management of the natives used to them, and submit to their drudgery with greater safety to the passenger, and are better calculated for these roads than the horse, which is used, but is not in the smallest degree to be compared for service to the mule, which is generally preferred through the country.

For figure and appearance of the fine, tall, royal mule, which is a noble animal, very far surpassing the race of horses at this time bred in Portugal; and when appropriately harnessed, would make no despicable figure in any state parade here, though it may be imagined, however richly caparisoned, they would make but a grotesque one in *Bond-street*, where so many animals of the highest breed are continually paraded in all the magnificence which art can give them.

Once a week there is a mart established, where horses of every description are publicly exposed for sale; but they are for the most part of a very inferior kind, and generally what are deemed unsound, either from service, or from some natural defect; the best are the Spanish

horses, which have often a good appearance, and attract the notice of those who may be looking out for a bargain; but, if he should chance to have any knowledge of this kind of traffic, he will soon find defects which will account for his being shown off in this repository: if these animals look well, they generally have bad feet, and worn out, which makes them so tender that they are dangerous to ride; the hard stony roads they have been used to travel, soon bring on these imperfections, and make them unsaleable; they are too, often perfect horses, and very troublesome on the road and in the stable.

The best horses to purchase are those which are brought from England with the army, and left by the officers who have returned, or have died in the country, though if these horses have been rode any time here, their feet will be injured by the hard roads, or will, in some other way, have materially suffered.

A stranger who has passed some time in Lisbon, and have formed an idea of travelling here, from the readiness and comfort with which matters were managed for him in other countries, particularly in England, must, after very little inquiry about it, have learnt that he would



be obliged *to put his wits to work*, and reconcile himself to many difficulties and inconveniencies that would otherwise put his temper and his patience to a practice he had been unaccustomed to : an officer who has been accustomed to march in a body, regimentally, has many of these difficulties done away for him, but when he moves singly or nearly so, it alters matters entirely, and he must prepare himself for exertion of mind and body, and learn to forego many comforts he used to experience.

As the accommodation through the country afforded very little inducement for loitering, the more expeditious movements are made the better : a good horseman, with a knowledge of the kind of road he has to pass, will readily get from one end of the country to the other if he has no luggage to interrupt him ; which the British officers often found practicable after a very short intercourse with the country. The post mules by which the letters are conveyed, travel with as much expedition as the country will admit of, even in the worst season of the year, when the roads are bad and the rivers overflowed. This same kind of mule is to be hired, with or without a carriage, such as the country affords.

The Medical Staff who were waiting Marshal Beresford's order, were, not without, hopes that Lord Wellington's conferences might lead to some arrangement respecting their destination, and they were not disappointed, for soon after his Lordship's departure from Lisbon, the Marshal issued his order, which appointed them stations to the several brigades and regiments which were dispersed in cantonments up the country; and had been for some months successfully disciplined under the British officers which had been attached to them, but of whom little information had been obtained; except now and then by an officer, who occasionally came down to Lisbon for a short period, who gave us to understand that our services would be very acceptable, and was, every where amongst them, much wanted; their hospitals being in a most deplorable state.

As yet no Inspector had arrived, though he had been expected, and, in all probability, had been impatiently waited for, from the time we landed. These orders contained no other information than the different cantonments we were to proceed to; it was, therefore, taken for granted, that each individual on his station, was to proceed according to his judgment, and to suggest such arrange-

ment at the hospitals as should seem obviously necessary.

The road to Liyrea, Coimbra, and Lemego, was the same as through the Estremadura province ; and the officers appointed to those stations determined to travel together. Horses and mules were accordingly provided, and, with as little delay as possible, we left Lisbon, with a Spanish servant, who had been recommended to take charge of the baggage, and who seemed particularly conversant with the road, and the different places it might be necessary to stop at.

The immense heights at the south-east extremity of Lisbon, did not admit of much speed ; we therefore slowly mounted those fortified and rocky passes, which, as we approached the summit, gave us a full but bird's-eye view of that city, and the villages and *Quintas* which beset the banks of the Tagus below.

The firm and steady pace with which our horses kept their way, gave us perfect confidence in their safety, and convinced us that they were accustomed to these roads ; and the fineness of the weather, with the novelty of the scene altogether,



soon reconciled us to the slow progress we were making, and insensibly beguiled the time, which otherwise, as English travellers, would have been tiresome and fatiguing.

It was noon when we began to descend these mountainous passes; the sun became very oppressive, and our conductor put us in mind that it would be necessary to bait the cattle at the first house we should arrive at, which he said was an inn (or Astrelege), which we were glad to enter, to secure us from the violent heat; it was a lone house, and had nothing particular to recommend it, but for the shelter it afforded us, and the beauty of the valley in which it was situated, and through which passed a very good even road, but immediately on leaving the inn, we began to ascend again the side of the mountain, but the sun having passed its meridian, we could avail ourselves of the shady side.

The scenery was extremely beautiful; the wide and extensive valley beneath the road, meandering at the bottom of the mountains, which were luxuriantly covered with vines, but whether now bearing fruit, we could not, from the distance, accurately perceive. Over the walls of the country

houses and *Quintas*, on the left of us, the grapes hung in vast abundance ; we were given to understand that the vintage for the season was nearly, if not quite, completed ; though we could still hear the screeching of those heavy unwieldy machines, which are still used on these occasions, the sound of which, though not very harmonious, they are said to be at some pains, and even expence, to increase, and that it gives a zest to the peasant, as well as to the oxen, whom it is supposed perform their labour with greater alacrity and cheerfulness, when thus inspired.

However inharmonious these sounds were, they certainly, on the present occasion, effected much to enliven the scenery, and could not fail to remind one of those Arcadian passages, which in our boyish days we had read of, and had been fixed in our minds by the great Manturn bard \*.

The suffering state of the country we were moving through, the perfect stillness of the same, and the apparent desolated state of it, all contributed to press upon one's mind the similitude, and made one conjecture that the first glow of

---

\* Virgil.

that *amor patriæ*, that love of one's native country, and that patriotism which grows up with it, is first inspired by this author of nature, when we were classically studying his lines, and the ideas thus early imbibed are not readily extinguished.

But these Arcadian scenes were soon dissipated as the evening came on ; and when we stopped at the village, and were informed we could not be accommodated at the inn, and learned that the *Juès de Fores* was at too great a distance for us to send, we therefore pursued our course, until we arrived at Villa Nova.

Travelling through a country which had so lately and so desperately felt the despoiling hand of a ferocious and unrelenting enemy, it was hardly to be expected our reception could be at all times welcome ; for though we constantly assured the inhabitants, wherever we wished to stop, that we expected nothing of them gratuitously, there was a shyness about them which indicated suspicion ; and, probably, some had suffered so much, that their minds became perfectly indifferent whether to friend or foe ; and but for the power of the *Juès de Fores*, we should occasionally have been more unpleasantly situated than we generally were ; and we were probably sometimes not a



little indebted to the representation of our conductor, who seemed well acquainted with the customs and dispositions of the people he had to deal with.

The road which we now took over the mountains was a military pass, over which we were conducted by an English Commissary, who was stationed at the small town below, and was on his duty collecting bullocks; the main road was round by Santarem, but the route which he took us was nearer, and the weather continuing very fine, was very inviting, had it been wet, it must have annoyed us much, for the pass was very steep, and we could only ascend it but by slow paces.

We were amply gratified when we reached the summit, by the vast extensive view which it commanded over the country through which we were to pass; the roads appeared good, and after descending from these mountains, there appeared to be no other between us and Lierea, where one of our companions\* was to leave us.

Here the Commissary left us to pursue our route, having pointed out to us our road, and in-

---

\* Mr. Jebb.

structed us where we should be most conveniently accommodated before we reached Lierea, which, according to our mode of travelling, would probably be two days. Long before the sun had set, and which, during the day had been very sultry and oppressive, we reached the place we intended to stop for the night ; it was a lone house, and had been established by the Government as a post-house, for the better accommodation of receiving their mules, which conveyed the mails, as well as for the convenience of travellers ; it certainly had more the appearance of a good inn than any we had seen ; the stables, which had been built for the royal post mules, were exceeding good, and our cattle excellently accommodated in them, which was particularly necessary to them, for they had hitherto been but indifferently lodged, and required refreshing:

The next morning we all seemed much better for our accommodation, and if such could be depended upon through the country, travelling, even at this time, might have been said to be very tolerable.

The weather continued fine, and we expected another sultry day. The road was sandy and heavy. Soon after we left the inn, we entered a very extensive olive grove, which secured us from

the heat of the sun whilst it continued to shine ; but in the afternoon it became clouded, and indicated rain ; our conductor pointed out to us a road to the left of that we were going, and told us it lead directly to Caldos, where were the famous hot-springs, so celebrated in this country for its medicinal virtues.

These sulphurous springs are very hot ; the baths are constructed at the Government expense, and before the Prince Regent went to the Brazils, were kept in good order, and at stated times of the year, were visited and used by the higher order of the people, in the same manner as those of our own country.

There is likewise an hospital established for the necessitous, and an inn for the reception of strangers who might wish to visit these baths, or have occasion to use them : but they were now suffered to get out of repair, and were not kept in that state of cleanliness and good order which render these desirable resourses, which Nature has furnished, so acceptable to the community.

These sulphurous springs are highly philogisticated, and it has been supposed that where these springs abound, they tend to pre-



vent those earthquakes which now and then so dreadfully convulse a country ; there is none probably which so generally shew the effects of these volcanic eruptions as this ; but where these are situated the country is a flat plain, which seems not to have felt those shocks.

These baths must be extremely beneficial in chronic diseases of the skin, which so much prevail in this country, and likewise in rheumatic affections, which, in various situations, are endemic, particularly in the rainy seasons of the year.

It is a trait, very highly commendable to the humane laws of this country, that these resources, and all other endowments, such as hospitals, &c., which are for the public good, are, for the most part, supplied from the funds of Government, so that there is no individual but may have the benefit of them.

It was quite dark before we had reached Batalha, and Mr. Jebb volunteered to ride on and obtain quarters for us ; my friend and I kept on the usual pace as we thought, but on entering the village we found that we had left the baggage and our servant behind, who soon after came up to us

and with some expressions of alarm, and a kind of reproof, intimated that we had done wrong to leave him alone, as our baggage might have been seized by the *latrons*, who were apt, at that time of the evening, to be lurking for their pray.

These *latrons* we had not before heard of, but it was told us that they came out in gangs from the neighbouring villages or hamlets, and attacked the unsuspecting traveller; their weapon was generally only a long pole, with which the natives used to help themselves over the rivulets and other difficult parts of the road, by the use of which they could vault over them, and can defend themselves very dexterously against even an armed person, who may rely on his sword: fire-arms are the greatest protection from these weapons, and which they dread more than any other defence, and at the sight of which they are said to fly.

In the city of Lierea was stationed a fine brigade of native troops, under a British commandant, assisted by officers from the British service. The city is large, situated on an open beautiful part of the country, capable of abundantly supplying it with necessaries, and extremely well adapted as a *depôt* for soldiers. The Bishop of Lierea, who resides here, has princely revenues; and from his known patriotism and his many pri-

vate virtues, was particularly marked out by the French, as a fit object for plunder, and he had been twice obliged to fly when they approached the city.

The priests, who were attached to him, left the palace likewise, and retired to the ruins of an old castle, on the summit of a hill, above the city, in the midst of which was a small chapel, where they had taken refuge, in hopes of being safe; but the French, on entering the palace, and finding it empty, followed them with the most remorseless avidity, supposing they had taken and secreted the valuables of the palace with them. For a time they resisted, and refused to open the doors to them; the consequence was, they fired in upon them and destroyed all the refugees. The doors still retain the marks of this inhuman act, and the numerous balls which were fired through the door, shew how determined they were to destroy them.

The Bishop had now returned, and was residing at his palace, where the British officers were received, and were most hospitably entertained, as a grateful return, no doubt, for the satisfaction and protection they afforded him, and for the security he once more enjoyed.

It was understood that the hospital established



here, was kept up and the expense of it solely defrayed by the revenues of the Bishop ; which must have been great, if the establishment in any degree was similar to those royal hospitals distributed over the country. But this was equally objectionable as a military hospital, being open to the civil community, and attended by the medicos who were not attached to the army.

Liereá, from its antiquity, must have contained much matter well worth recording, that would have amply filled the historic pages.

There was one of those sulphurous springs with which this country abounds, close to the city, which, though not preserved with equal care or expense as those of Caldos, must, from its vicinity to so large a city, have been equally useful. The heat of these waters were moderate, not exceeding those of Matlock or Buxton in our own country, which are about 80 degrees.

Over the heights which front the city of Coimbra, on the south-west, passes the road from Condixio, and about a mile from it, you command the best and most interesting view of that very ancient city ; which is very striking from this spot. The river Mondego runs along the bottom

of the city, and seems to circumvent it ; and the massy buildings above, which gradually rise by rows in succession, till they form one large grand pyramid.

The approach to the city, when you have descended from the heights, is by a stone bridge\* which extends over the river Mondego ; it has nothing remarkable in its structure, either for loftiness, or grandeur, though it is said to be of Roman antiquity ; it stretches completely over the Mondego, which, during the late summer months, had become very much contracted, and the stream, which was confined to the centre, was so very narrow in many parts as to seem fordable ; but the broad and sloping sandy banks on each side, shewed, when the rains had swelled the river, to what an extent it rose. The passengers on the bridge were numerous on each side, yet

---

\* This bridge, since made memorable by the famous parley between General Trant, at the head of the Oporto troops, and that able commander of the French army, Massena, who was lulled into a belief that he should have possession of the city, until Lord Wellington with his army unexpectedly pressed upon him, and he hastily retired without entering it, which saved the city from plunder and the inhabitants from being severely handled.

left a good open road for horses and carriages in the middle. At the extremity of the bridge is a large gateway, apparently as ancient as the city : immediately up a small winding ascent, is another, which is of similar structure.

The entrance to the principle street of the city, which is very extensive, extending through the whole city ; it is here and there narrow, but the houses, though old, are lofty, and for the most part has a good appearance. They are inhabited by merchants in general, and here they carry on their business ; and shops of every description are seen in it.

Our conductor lead us to the market-place, which was on the left of the street, and we stopped at a large old building that answers to our town hall, &c. which he told us was the residence of the *Juës de Fores*, or chief magistrate : our arrival was made known to him, and we were without delay furnished with billets for ourselves and horses, at the *Collegio Novo*, a convent, attached to that of *Santa Cruz*, which is the largest in size, and of the highest order\* in Coimbra. The *Collegio Novo* is situated about the middle

---

\* The Order of Benedictine.



of the city, above the street we had entered, and the way to it gave us the idea of climbing, so steep were the narrow streets and passes to it.

On being announced, the large heavy gates were unfolded to us, and we entered that friendly and hospitable asylum ; when the servant left us to inform the *comprador*, or superior of the convent, to whom we were soon conducted.

Our reception was polite and flattering, being assured by Don Francisco (the *comprador*) that every thing should be done to accommodate us and make us comfortable, and gave his instructions accordingly.

It is impossible to do justice to the hospitality and kindness of the inhabitants of this convent, which is an appendage to that of Santa Cruix, and receives the junior order of that institution, designed for the ministry of their church. They are chiefly young men of good family, who have chosen it from principle. There are other elder brethren, who reside in the college, and preside over them, and to whom are confided the management and daily service of the convent.

These young men had previously received their

education in one of the universities, and are consequently well grounded in classical learning; indeed most of their theological studies are in the Latin tongue. They speak French fluently, and were very desirous of learning English; and would frequently, in the evening call, and desire me to listen to their reading, with a view of obtaining a proper pronounciation. Their favourite author was *Telemachus*, whose character and description seemed to be very much in unison with their ideas, and into which they seemed to enter with great delight. For the same reason, it is probable, they would have admired *Johnson's Abyssinia*; and that author would have been a very excellent specimen of the English style; and many other of our publications would have given them an higher opinion of the English character, than they, from their confined society, may be supposed to have acquired. Their daily occupation was wholly in the study and practice of religion; and though thus rigidly confined to these serious and over-ruling studies, they were pleasant in their manner, and even cheerful in their conversation on ordinary subjects; and though their tenets and forms so widely differ from our own, their zeal and fervency were very impressive, and could not fail to attract our admiration,

It was pleasing to see them in those serene and quiet afternoons, for which this country is so distinguished, ranging in parties amidst those beautiful and extensive gardens which environ their convent, and which seclude them in that peaceful solitude, so desirable to minds devoted as theirs are, to objects of a superior nature.

In the convent of Santa Cruix was a very extensive library, which, of course, consisted of authors on theology, in abundance; but it contained likewise fine editions on other subjects, in various languages; and a very large collection of maps. This library was open all the day to the inhabitants of the convent, as well as to strangers who inhabited it \*.

---

\* When the French army was ravaging the country, under Junot, afterwards Marquis of Abrantes, this General took up his abode at the Collegio Novo, and whilst there, was smitten with the charms of a tradesman's daughter of the city, and made use of every art and stratagem to get her conveyed into the convent, which was as dexterously thwarted by the parents of the girl, and the people of the college. When Junot found he was not likely to succeed, and being about to leave the city, he sent for the father, and borrowed a sum of money from him, which was complied with, and by that means he saved his daughter: but Junot did not leave this



Coimbra is one of the most ancient as well as most celebrated cities in Portugal, and from its central situation in the country, was well selected for assembling the native troops: it was occupied by four strong regiments, which formed two brigades, under the command of a British officer, (General Campbell). Besides the recruits which were constantly brought in, it likewise proved convenient for the British troops in passing eastward toward the frontier of the country, where the French were beginning to assemble in force.

This city was remarkable for the number of convents which it contained, many of which had been deserted; and some had been converted into hospitals for the reception of native civilians, and were supported by grants from the Government, on the most liberal as well as extensive foundation. These hospitals were attended by the civil medicos, who had graduated from the

---

sanctuary without breathing revenge on his return; he threatened, on his next visit, to take up his residence there and that he would make the convent of Santa Cruix his stables; fortunately, however, the General was obliged to take another route home, and never had an opportunity to put his threat into execution.

universities \* of this city, or at Lisbon. Here the old, infirm, and disabled mechanics, whom disease or misfortune might have driven to these asylums, could avail themselves of those indulgencies with which the liberality of the Government had so amply supplied them.

But these civil hospitals were ill-calculated for the reception of the soldiers, or for converting into military hospitals, which, according to the laws and customs of the country, they were designed to be, if occasion or necessity should require such a measure.

---

\* The university of Coimbra is of very ancient endowments, where youth are brought forward in their different professions, and receive their degrees from it. Here learning is still cultivated, notwithstanding the turbulence of the times. The original building seems to be of ancient structure, but the adjoining schools are modern, and very superb edifices. There is an excellent observatory, well stocked with expensive instruments, which were from England; and a most superb library, which in 1809 remained entire, having escaped the plundering hands of the enemy: but the museum, which had formerly boasted of every thing valuable and curious, had been stripped, and now exhibited only a few specimens of animals, and the empty frames which had contained, in complete systematic arrangement, every thing creative Nature produces from all parts of the world.

The young and hearty soldier, though he merited every care and attention under sickness and accident, would be absolutely lost to the service, if not carefully and timely roused to his duty, as sickness vanished, and his strength recruited.

Nothing could more forcibly illustrate the truth of these observations, than the state of the hospitals at Coimbra at this juncture, in which the civilian and the soldier were incautiously blended together, and formed such a scene of confusion and misery that surpasses every thing of the kind which has been noticed in any country.

The system to be adopted was evident, but required great care and exertion to effect it; and even then could not be attempted without the concurrence of the higher authorities. Indeed it required an absolute revision of their laws, and a new code of regulations for the management of their hospitals altogether, civil as well as military, before they could be formed for the advantage of the army.

In such a state of matters little could be expected from the exertion of any single individual, and remonstrances on the subject were very ill received



whilst the impossibility of effecting any good was apparent : yet to remain indifferent to the wretchedness which daily presented itself, was incompatible with the mind of any man who was earnestly bent upon his duty, and who felt as it were, particularly warmed into action, from the difficulties and mischief which presented themselves.

It was well known that the finances of the country could not be in the most flourishing state, and although they might be sufficient to maintain their civil hospitals according to their accustomed forms, yet they were very unequal to the additional burden, which was constantly accumulating, from the admission of the sick from the army, which were on no occasion rejected, though they had no means of providing for them, so that all cases of disease were huddled together, which at once declared their inability to provide for those great and incessant calls on their institution ; but still the humanity with which they extended their means to every individual, though it was to the discomfiture of the whole, *reflected* great merit on those concerned, for the zeal they manifested in performing their duties.

Although it appeared that every exertion was

made by the *Physico-Mor*\*, to do justice in every case which presented, and additional attendants were called in to his assistance, as by their laws was established ; yet it was impossible, from the crowded state of the hospitals, and from the want of arrangements amongst the sick, but that some must be overlooked ; and thus, whilst the army-surgeons and the assistants remained inactive, not being allowed to act in these hospitals : indeed the very small pay that these gentlemen were allowed, and the want of rank amongst the officers was very degrading to the profession, and many of the oldest and ablest of these surgeons had withdrawn themselves from their service in despair, thinking it not likely that their services would ever be called for again in a manner that they could honorably accept with credit to themselves, or respectability to the profession.

This was certainly the time when an Inspector, at the head of the British staff, might have been conspicuously useful to his Excellency Marshal Beresford, by pointing out these defects, and by bringing forward a well-adjusted plan, have enabled his Excellency to set aside all the existing

---

\* Chief Physician.

difficulties, and to have placed his military hospitals on an equal footing with the British, agreeably to the intention, for which the medical staff had been appointed to him ; but no such officer had as yet arrived.

The same mismanagement, and the same degrading system prevailed wherever there were native hospitals ; and wherever a medical officer was stationed, he felt the disagreeable situation he was placed in, and unauthorized as he was, the impossibility of exercising his judgment to any advantage.

The station at Coimbra, from the extent of the native hospitals, the great number of troops brigading there, and the prodigious number which were admitted to those hospitals, seemed to be the place next to Lisbon, where the head of this department were selected, from which any representation could be made, and the difficulties which was daily experienced could be accurately pointed out.

No doubt, representation had been made to the heads of the medical department in Lisbon, by the *Physico 'Mor*, and advice received by him, from time to time ; but this board



did not seem to feel themselves possessed of the power which an inspector of the army hospital acted upon in the British service ; their instructions only authorize the Physico 'Mor and Surgeon to act, in every respect, for the good of the whole, without particularizing or noting the necessity for adopting their plan to the staff, whom they must know had been sent to regulate the sick troops under Marshal Beresford's orders. Had that distinction in the hospitals been acknowledged all difficulty would have been done away, and a separation of the sick soldier from the civilian would naturally have taken place ; brigade or regimental hospitals formed, and the army surgeons been employed to the extent they must have been originally intended.

The native hospitals at Coimbra were originally convents : there were two of them, both situated on the heights above the city ; they were large, spacious, and roomy buildings, commanding free and uninterrupted air all round them, and possessing every convenience requisite for the purpose of the sick. That at St. Thomar\* was that which

---

\* In this hospital resided the Almoxafire, or officer, who provides the stores and provision, and received from the Government the customs by which these hospitals were main-

had been just appropriated for an hospital : the centre of the building formed a long square, and on each side, above and below, were spacious wards, which were filled with patients, most of them civilians; many of whom had been there a great length of time, labouring under old chronic diseases, and to all appearance, not likely to be restored, or to be objects for discharging.

The hospital of St. Benevento, was but a short distance from this, situated rather higher, and nearer the city, but having all the requisites of St. Thomar for an hospital ; only a portion of the edifice had been used as such, and was intended to receive only the convalescents from St Thomar on slight cases, only to relieve the other, and prevent its being crowded ; an institution which seemed to have been lately formed from necessity, the hospital of St. Thomar being incapable of receiving more, and was certainly overwhelmed with numbers, from the civilians as well as from the soldiers ; and which, from the confusion they were in, rendered it impossible to enter into the curative indications assigned to them, or indeed to

---

tained. He is an officer of great trust, and through him and the Secretary every thing necessary to the establishment, passe sand are accounted for by them.

consider them at all, until cleanliness, regularity, and other preliminaries could be established.

The Brigadier, who commanded, had felt the mischief attending this insubordinate system, and exerted himself to change it: he was a most active and zealous officer, extremely assiduous for the success of the troops under him, and seemed to think that the same zeal and activity which he shewed in the field, would rectify the fatal confusion which prevailed amongst the sick, and which really cramped the efforts of the medicos who had the charge of them: but the Brigadier soon learnt that disease, and want of arrangement, was not to be overcome by word of command; and that the medical officer was not that cypher which might be supplied by any other zealous and well meaning individual; and it was my opinion, that he had better shut the door of the hospital to his troops rather than suffer so disgraceful a scene which at this time presented itself, and proved so destructive to them; in short, the only means that could be devised, was an absolute separation of the sick of his brigade from the civil hospitals, and to form for them brigade or regimental hospitals, on a similar plan, with those of the British.



This opinion, however it might have been received by the Brigadier, certainly struck him as very just and proper ; yet it could not be put in practice. In the first place, not having the sanction of his Excellency Marshal Beresford, and as the military hospitals of the country, were by law and custom, always supported at the expence of Government, it would be deemed an innovation, which it would not be politic at this moment to enforce.

The principle, therefore, I could not further urge, as there was no Inspector arrived with sufficient authority to put it in practice, and, indeed, seemed averse to speak on the subject ; all the service, therefore, that I could propose to myself, was a daily intercourse with the medicos of the hospitals, (particularly with the Physico 'Mor,) and constantly pointing out to them, and recommending such measures as were likely to obviate those discouraging circumstances, which had hitherto baffled every effort to amend.

It is but justice to those gentlemen to observe, they were always attentive, and with great courtesy received any remarks made ; but fairly replied, that the finances of the hospitals were such, that they could not make any alterations, or adopt

any measures, however beneficial they might be; nor had they the means of providing more conveniences or necessities for the crowded sick, who actually lay on the floor in their clothes for want of bedding. These were chiefly recruits very young, and who seemed particularly affected by the cold and damps, which, as the rainy season had commenced, were very distressing, and in this country render the hardest constitution very susceptible to their influence.

The curative part in all these mixed cases may be supposed to have fallen very short of the means intended, and which, under any other circumstances, might have resulted from the regular routine of practice they had been in the habit of fulfilling.

The attention of the Physico 'Mor and Surgeon, with their assistants, was truly exemplary; but though they acted professionally, and in every particular, agreeably to the rules and laws established for these hospitals, they felt themselves not authorized, and therefore declined taking any authority over the soldiers, whom they considered under them as any other civilian who was admitted.

The recruit and the soldier therefore lost all his military ideas the moment he entered as a patient into the hospital, and was, for the most part, entirely lost to his regiment, very few even being discharged, or even thought of again joining his regiment.

In December, Marshal Beresford issued a letter that was circulated among the British staff-surgeons on his establishment, which authorized them to superintend the hospitals at their stations, to give their advice and assistance in their professional duties, where it appeared necessary ; but on no account for the British staff to interfere with the economy or responsibility of the hospitals which were established by law ; and which system, it must be observed, was, if it could have been practised by the medicos, the most ample and beneficial that could have been devised ; but it was at the same time observed, that on all occasions the most perfect harmony was to subsist towards the\* civilians who were by law established, and authorized to transact the professional duties of the hospital, and were also responsible for the economy of it.

---

\* Physico 'Mor, Surgeon, and Almoxafire.



This was the first advice his Excellency Marshal Beresford thought proper officially to announce to his medical staff, which was sent to them by his secretary, Colonel Arbuthnot, now Sir Robert Arbuthnot, including a letter which had been sent to the Physico 'Mor, at Lisbon, through the Adjutant-General of the Portuguese staff.

This letter \* was certainly not without its use,

---

\* SIR,

Having laid your letter of the 26th ult. before his Excellency Marshal Beresford, Commander-in-Chief of the Army, I have his orders to inform you, that the economy, responsibility, and accounts of the hospitals, ought, without any deviation whatever, to be with the first physicians of the hospitals, and Almoxafires, according to law; but that it is necessary the staff surgeons of brigade, as well English as Portuguese, should enquire into the mode of treatment of the sick, particularly in what regards the immediate method of cure; and these should adopt it when recommended, either from the reasons the surgeons may give, *or by an experiment*, of which system is best. And the physicians even should enquire the opinion of *the surgeon of brigades*, as it will be a consultation from which they must respectively derive information, and from this must result great advantage towards the health of the troops. This can, and, must all be done with perfect harmony, which you will be pleased to recommend, giving your orders accordingly to

as the brigadier announced me in his orders, which in some degree satisfied the Physico 'Mor and surgeon, as well as the regimental surgeons, and removed that questionable authority under which I had hitherto acted amongst them.

From the wretched and unmanageable state those hospitals were in, my daily visits to them could effect but little improvement, unless some more radical reform could have been adopted; but the fear of producing discontent, and probably thereby interrupting the more material objects in view, made it advisable to postpone any further interference for the present. The plans I had from time to time suggested were but little attended to, and the same wretched system continued, with little variation \*.

---

what has been said above, *and his Excellency will give his on the same tenor.*

(Signed)

MANUEL DE BRETO MOUSENHOF,  
Adjutant-General.

*To Senr. Jono Manuel Nimoz de Volle,  
Physician-General, &c. &c.*

\* It was not an unusual sight on my entering the hospital in the morning, to find a soldier had been admitted since I

The absolute filthiness of these hospitals, and the total neglect of all those essential requisites for arresting disease, and are preparatory to their cure, was so glaring that until these points could be in some measure established, it was quite useless to enter into their practice, medical or surgical.

The classification of diseases was another point demanding immediate attention, as all sorts were so intermingled that they in themselves produced the most fatal consequences; nor could it be overlooked, that the general want of subordination give these hospitals an appearance quite the reverse of what they should have been.

Forbidding as all this was in the extreme, it did not interrupt me in my pursuits and daily endeavour, as I hoped that time, and steady perseverance, might at length work some reformation; especially as the Physico 'Mor, and Surgeon 'Mor, agreed that something was necessary, and that

---

left it in a clean bed, with his clothes on, from head to foot, not excepting his shoes and gaiters; and if a trooper, with his boots and spurs.



they would do all in their power to accomplish what was so evident.

These assurances gave me some hopes of success, and rendered my daily visits at the hospital more satisfactory ; but still the progress to amendment was slow, and without incessant application, what was proposed one day was forgot or neglected the next ; and whenever application, or reference to the commandant, was made upon any occasion, it was always waved by him, and put off, by referring me to the time when the Marshal himself was to visit Coimbra, who was now daily expected ; but my object was to put every thing upon the best footing, and to give these hospitals the best appearance before his arrival, lest I should incur his displeasure, and neglect and inattention be imputed to me.

The rains had commenced ; they were not incessant, and the weather at intervals was in the day extremely fine, with a hot sun ; but the mornings and evenings were damp and cold ; which, from the general want of fires in this country, made it very unpleasant, and in crowded barracks very unwholesome. The troops felt this, though natives, and inured to the climate, for fevers were generated, and became very prevalent amongst

them ; they were not confined to the recruits, but extended to the disciplined troops, whose constitutions, it may be supposed, had been rendered hardier, and not so susceptible.

These fevers, which were of the typhus class, as the rainy season advanced, put on the worst appearances, and were at length of the most malignant kind ; treacherous in the onset, but proving very fatal soon after they were admitted into the hospital.

The natives are said to be at this season of the year very liable to this kind of fever, but they were just now more prevalent than usual, which may be accounted for from several very cogent causes.

The Portuguese subject, though possessing very many requisites to form the soldier, has likewise, from natural habits, dispositions, and prejudices, many obstacles to overcome before the end can be accomplished : he is, from constant exposure, able to endure the vicissitudes of his climate, which are very great ; but where they are remote from the crowded cities, they are certainly more athletic and robust in constitution ; they are naturally very abstemious, which is at times most

rigidly imposed upon them, and render them susceptible to impressions from disease, especially if the will or mind is not in perfect unison with the duty expected of; him this must increase the disposition to slothfulness, to which they are naturally inclined.

The rations of a Portuguese soldier had been too meagre ; and though in time of peace, and when employed at his own home, it might be sufficient, and probably conformable to the sacerdotal decrees of the country, was ill calculated to brace up and invigorate a constitution to endure the harder severities of a soldier, in time of war.

The mode of enlisting, or rather of enforcing, recruits for the Portuguese army, are not very different from that of other arbitrary countries ; nor does it differ greatly from the practice of pressing for the navy in our own country : here every family being obliged to give up a certain number, according to the strength of it, for the service when needful ; and the mode in which this was enforced was certainly not calculated to impress the recruit with the most favourable ideas of the service, though coercion seems absolutely necessary, for from the supineness of the Portu-



guesse character, and the great antipathy he seemed to feel for military employment, the army might have been given up altogether, and the country left exposed an easy prey to any despotic power which might invade it.

To these causes may be attributed the prevalence of epidemic typhus, at this time augmented by the constant influx of fresh subjects, the crowded state of them, and the want of arrangement through the whole hospital.

The treatment of these fevers, by the native physicians, appeared to me to be exceeding judicious, and well calculated for the constitutions they had been used to, and was very successful, where they had opportunities of having it followed up with proper attention, which occurred in several severe cases amongst the medical attendants themselves, who caught the fever whilst engaged in those hospitals.

Amongst the various cases, medical and surgical, with which these hospitals at Coimbra abounded, there were none which struck me more forcibly, or more early engaged my attention, than the syphilitic cases, which lay in such deplorable states, that they at once excited my compassion,

and made me very anxious to find out the causes by which that disease was suffered to gain such ascendancy over the constitutions, as to threaten death ; and which did actually prove fatal in several instances under my own observation, within the time of my superintendence at these hospitals.

One might have amused one's self formerly by enquiry into the history of that disease, from the remotest period ; and as part of that study, which would render one more completely master of the subject,\* and in the course of such study have read of the miseries incurred from their ignorance in the management of the disease, and from the want of a specific, and which, after it was known, was a long time before the use of it was brought into general use, and much longer before it was regulated, and its specific action properly directed to the various cases which were observed to arise from the infection ; but when experience had clearly demonstrated, and had established the practice of it, the disease gradually lost its violence, and at length, to so great a degree altered the nature of it, that it ceased to be considered

---

\* Astrue, and his Commentator, Chapman, &c. &c.

as dangerous, but perfectly manageable, under the mild and skilful use of a remedy which was acknowledged by every one to be absolutely specific in it.

The disease was no longer considered, as formerly it had been, an opprobrium to surgery; and protracted cases were observed only from mismanagement, or some peculiarity which, by an experienced practitioner, was readily overcome.

It was not without astonishment that I found these hospitals abounding with these extraordinary cases of syphilis, which were supposed to have been long since extinct, and remaining only in the memory, from what had been recited in the earliest and remotest history of the disease.

In this country too, where physic and surgery had long flourished, and were ably taught and practised, by professors capable of judging, and whose abilities would have done honour to any country, it was astonishing to British surgeons to observe so many objects sinking under the disease, in the last stages of it, when it was too late for any means to be taken that could promise a chance of success.



There are peculiarities and prejudices in every country, which are generally founded on experience, and which have been established by the concurring testimony and approbation of all parties who had examined them; and from time to time have been handed down to posterity as acknowledged facts, which could not now be controverted.

Such appears to me to be their antipathy to the use of mercury, as a specific for syphilis complaints: from whence that prejudice originated cannot be easily explained or determined; it was probably so long ago as in the earlier times, before that remedy had been well established in the opinions of professional men, and before the general use of it had been cleared of those baneful effects which were found at one time to accompany its use; and, it is probable, that in the constitutions of that country, the specific, indiscriminately administered as it formerly was, might have created deleterious effects, and have discouraged them even from a more moderate and scientific use of it.

The sarsaparella was in the last century brought to us from America, and was said to supercede

the use of mercury, but was found very insufficient without it; it greatly assisted and promoted the specific qualities of it, and proved to be equally serviceable in counteracting the baneful effects of that mineral, when it had been injudiciously administered; but the case of syphilis in this country was rarely, if ever, entrusted to it.

In Portugal, where the constitutions are much more susceptible than ours, it is probable this specific might, in the usual manner it was exhibited, have proved very prejudicial; and the disease, when complicated with others, and particularly with scorbutic or scrophulous habits, might have rendered this specific very doubtful; and at length practitioners might have given it up entirely, and confided to the sarsaparella, after their manner of exhibiting it, in decoction with other vegetable articles, some of which had formerly been held in equal estimation with the sarsaparella itself for the cure of the disease.

The famed Lisbon diet drink, which was sent over to us from that country, must be in the memory of those practitioners who were conversant in the practice of physic and surgery about half a century ago; it was received at that time into our Dispensaries, and held in great repute in

scrophulus and scorbutic complaints ; but I believe no one ever found it sufficient alone in any case of confirmed syphilis.

Their antipathy to the use of mercury in the syphilis, whatever might have been the reason, was very great ; they boasted of being able to effect cures without it ; and in recent cases, I certainly believed they did succeed, inasmuch as chencres were healed, and gonorrhæas suppressed by it, aided by the topical applications and these decoctions ; but the result of that practice did not justify them in pursuing it, for the dreadful examples which presented themselves, and still remained under their cure, where they had not succeeded, or which had afterwards appeared in secondary affections of the constitutions, resisting every means they could contrive, and which had so far contaminated the habit, that the specific itself could not be with propriety recommended, or even attempted to be administered, with any chance of success.

The dreadful cases I allude to, where extensive, deep-seated ulcers, which had originally been suppurated buboes, such as have been long known to us, as the true venereal buboe, arising from absorption, and which has been invariably found



with us to yield only to a prudent exhibition of its specific, mercury; the sight of these horrible cases would at once have declared the attempt without it futile and highly improper, and could not but excite sensations of horror and disgust, and have condemned the practice, as it had been by our forefathers long before.

Little as I wished to interfere with their established regulations of practice, to which they appeared so bigoted, I could not forbear remonstrating with them on these cases, as the objects were actually perishing from the disease, in various states, particularly with these dreadful ulcerations, which had increased from one degree to another, until they were sinking under violent colloquitive sweats, morasmus, and all those hectic symptoms, which show nature to be entirely exhausted.

When the disease had acquired this formidable ascendancy, it would have been absurd to have attempted any plan in the nature of a specific; but there were other cases where hectic symptoms had not yet appeared, at least, to any great degree; and I so far prevailed upon them, that they agreed, if I would draw up a summary statement of the practice I wished them to adopt, they

would try it: accordingly, a brief statement of the case, by unction, was submitted to the Physico 'Mor, who observed, that they were well acquainted with the practice I had suggested, but it was grown obsolete; and the plan was rejected.

After much perseverance, I so far gained upon the Physico 'Mor that he permitted me to superintend a few cases, which were selected, and on which I engaged to see the process daily performed; but, after all, I found the antipathy to the specific prevailed amongst the patients full as strongly as amongst the surgeons; and when in the act of using the ointment, I have actually seen the tears run down their checks, and they would sob like children as if doing violence to them, which they could not overcome; this, with the awkward and unwilling manner in which it was performed, and the pains they daily took to evade it, made me give up the attempt altogether, and before any opinion could be founded upon the event; but it could not be doubted, that if it had been steadily pursued, and with proper caution, so as not to suffer it to produce those baneful effects, which too frequently follow the indiscriminate use of it, in all constitutions, without sufficiently guarding some, or rejecting the mode altogether in others: indeed, in many of these cases, the disease had

been suffered to prey so long on the constitution, and the havoc and destruction it had made locally, absolutely forbid the exhibition of it in any shape or degree ; and would, under those circumstances, have only brought the specific into further disrepute with them, and have increased their prejudices against it.

It has often struck me, when reflecting on these desperate cases of ulceration, whether the disease itself had not worn itself out at last, for large and horrible as they were, they seemed to have lost those characters by which venereal ulcers are distinguished, while in their active and progressive state, the high protuberating callous edges had sunk, were become flabby, and they were stationary, nature seemed to be so completely exhausted that the virus could no longer act upon the constitution. If such was really the consequence of leaving the venereal virus uncontrolled by the specific, it might indeed be said to cure itself by this means, which was ultimately by death, a mode, I presume, none would affect to boast of, or attempt to adopt, either in public or private practice : it puts one in mind of the old facetious story of the farrier, who sent a bill for curing his honour's horse, that died.



A practice has been of late brought forward in this country, said to be founded on the experience of surgeons who stand high for reputation in the army, and have declared that mercury, in whatever form administered, is absolutely unnecessary, in any state or stage which syphilis may be found ; a doctrine that must astonish and confound every one who has been in the habit of considering such a system, if not impracticable, as very unsafe, and, bold as the assertion may be, is very unjustifiable. Still, as it is brought forward by surgeons, who may be supposed capable of forming such opinions, and not likely to advance them without due consideration, as well as with a cautious regard to the honour of the profession, and the welfare of mankind in general, it is incumbent on every one concerned, however he may have been biased by former practice, to give it a fair and candid enquiry ; for although it may sooner or later be rejected, as it had been long ago, yet it may have a good effect, by bringing the practice under the close and critical enquiry of those eminent and distinguished practitioners, who, from their situations, have opportunities, as well as abilities, to decide upon it, and who will, no doubt, set aside those abuses which, it must be acknowledged have, from time to time, imperceptibly

crept into the practice, by the use of the specific, amongst the regular and well meaning class of practitioners ; and which, inattention, it is to be apprehended, has given to the irregulars such frequent opportunities of imposing upon the world.

This doctrine, from the practice of which so many dreadful consequences may be apprehended, cannot be received as new, excepting by some of the junior \* practioners, of the present time ; to those who were, for the last half century, at least, attending and observing the practice of their forefathers, it must have been known that the disease admitted of a cure in the various stages it then presented itself, without the interposition of its famed specific mercury : but the probity of their intentions, and the cautions handed down to them by their predecessors, which had been founded, not on theory, but on those incontro-

---

\* By this distinction it is not meant, nor should it be received as in the least degree disrespectful, the intention being only to shew, how very lately the present revived doctrine was known, and that the specific mercury was indispensibly necessary to the extinction of the disease, and that however it might be suppressed or palliated no other could be depended upon.

vertible facts, which had been seen by them, and which they had stated in all its horrors, as prevailing, in these old, cautious, and discerning times.

These opinions, and the practice founded on them, were again handed down and inculcated amongst us, by our immediate predecessors; men who were not apt to suffer imposition, to thwart them unperceived, and who did not blindly copy what was set before them, but who were accustomed to weigh well the authorities which had directed them, and had spirit to promulgate what they had found proper for our imitation, and likely to benefit the future generation; but which they, from the course of Nature, could only hope their observations and practice would effect.

To set aside opinions thus formed, and abolish a system thus established, could not be the business of a day; the practice has been only convincing to a few in this country, but it will require the voice of the multitude, to confirm and proclaim its safety. The result of this system, if further pursued, may be imagined from what has been observed in Portugal, and even at home, the cases which have been brought forward, since the at-



tempt to revive it has been made, will doubtless, have a tendency to shew the futility of it, rather than advance its progress.

Fifty years ago it was well known to the surgeons of that time, that syphilis might be partially cured, by the common applications then in vogue. Genorrhæa might be cured, chancres healed, buboes might be dispersed, and other symptoms of it, in various shapes and situations, might be, in a summary manner, for a time, suppressed. The specific was not brought into use, because no other means were known which could interrupt the progress of the various symptoms, when they appeared, for they were numerous, as by reverting to the various authors who had previously wrote on the subject before the specific properties of mercury were found out and explained.

The practice, therefore, of suppressing it without mercury, had been well-known, and the appearance of it in the constitution after these supposed cures, were as equally well-known, and the specific qualities of mercury were found to be the only remedy which could effectually subdue them, and eradicate them from the constitution.

It was not, therefore, that they had not the means to do it, without that specific, but that they found the attempt to be futile and dangerous: yet, until the specific was established these ineffectual remedies were the only methods they could resort to.

This revived theory of syphilis may be, for a short time, supported by cases, and, I have no doubt, but the cases thus resorted to, may be on their side. I could bring forward many, which within the period of more than twenty years, (the time I have been fully engaged in the army hospitals), have often occurred to me, although I never offered to deviate decidedly from the established practice, supported by the concurrence of the heads of that department, as well as by the universal suffrage and example of all the eminent practitioners in their public as well as in their private practice; but I must declare my opinion, that the general practice of military surgeons in this disease, is paramount to every other, but the last I should think of quoting to establish any other system, excepting that which has been so successfully carried on by the numerous body of practitioners attached to these army hospitals.

It must have been known to them, that the

soldier could, and did often avail himself of the knowledge which his comrade imparted to him; and to avoid confinement and the duration of an hospital, could by the most simple means, get rid of what are called the primary symptoms of the disease, and thus supercede, for a time at least, the scientific measures which his surgeon would have subjected him to; and although warned of the consequences, still persisted in the practice, until his indiscretion could no longer be kept secret. Many cases of confirmed syphilis produced in this way, might be brought forward; and I am clearly satisfied in my opinion, that from the army no just conclusion can be formed from such cases, so superficially treated, the frequent changes of the surgeon from the patient, or the patient from the surgeon, with other intervening casualties preclude him from forming an opinion of them, on which he may establish a system that can be generally adopted; and I am further persuaded that if the army surgeons were generally applied to, they would give their decided voice against this revived system.

In private practice, I conceive, it must be equally rejected, prudential motives must deter them from adopting it, as one fatal case might ruin him for ever.



Amongst the many glaring abuses which prevailed in these hospitals, was an invincible propensity in these people for lying in their beds, when only labouring under slight indispositions, which did not require that they should do so, and which custom, if not actually countenanced by the attending physicians, they did not forbid; and to so great a degree had it been allowed, that some of these miserable objects had continued in their beds for months, and actually, until their original maladies, had been forgot, and they had from length of time, rendered themselves incapable of rising. This practice in an alms-house might be tolerated amongst the civilians, but as the propensity was encouraged amongst the soldiers it could not be observed with indifference as it had already rendered many of them unfit for further service; and this intention was clearly aimed at by some; a species of malingering which called for the utmost vigilance and exertion to prevent. It was a woeful example for the young recruit, who had on joining his regiment, been obliged, from some slight indisposition, to be sent into the hospital, where he found no interruption, to prevent his continuing there, until he was overlooked or forgotten.

A more favorable opportunity could not have

presented itself, for the interference of the British medical staff, for introducing the system of their army hospitals, and for shewing the advantage which would result by adopting their regulations, for preventing disease, or arresting it when it existed; on the other hand, nothing could more forcibly exemplify the increase and fatality of them, when that system was deviated from.

The winter or rainy season, which in this country is short, and very far advanced: the sun began to shew its influence, and dissipate the damps and fogs, and gave to the country an appearance of early spring; but the rivers were still full, and in many parts, overflowing the banks. It was not until the early part of January, that Marshal Beresford, though long expected, arrived at Coimbra: his stay was at this time short, but he took an early opportunity of visiting the hospitals, and witnessing those distressing scenes which he, no doubt, had been made acquainted with, and had most likely occupied his attention, although he had not thought proper to interpose his authority on the subject.

His Excellency seemed perfectly prepared to meet the confusion I attempted to represent to

him, and he instantly acquitted me of any thing culpable, which I certainly was fearful might be attached to me.

The horrible state in which the Marshal found these hospitals, soon convinced him of the necessity of adopting some plan for their immediate amendment, and the minute investigation with which he entered into the subject, shewed him perfectly competent to it : he attended with great attention to the observations made, and to the various plans proposed for doing away those abuses, which every where existed through these hospitals, many of which he directed to be adopted, and pointed out others, which could not fail to remove the crowded state of them.

Neither the humane intentions of the legislator, nor the laws of the country, ought unnecessarily to be infringed upon, but where it was evident that abuses had crept in to the subversion of all good purposes, it became incumbent on his Excellency to make such alterations as were likely to correct them, and convert them to the exigencies of the state ; such indeed appeared to be the rule which guided him in every thing which was adopted under his direction, when visiting these hospitals.



large wards which were crowded with these miserable objects, that had, in a great measure, from supineness and sloth rendered themselves bed-ridden; and were not only nuisances to themselves, but had made the very place in which they existed so. He ordered these wards to be instantly evacuated, and every means to be taken to clean and ventilate them, and make them wholesome for the reception of the troops.

To the infirm and sickly soldier, whose chance of recovery was doubtful, he gave unlimited furloughs, and to the convalescents he gave such length of time, as might renovate and restore them.

These, with such other substantial regulations, were at once striking at the root of the evil without altering the existing laws of the country: he enjoined the Physico 'Mor to aid in these reforms; and directed that if any interruption should take place in the execution of them, he should be applied to.

This visit from his Excellency certainly had a good effect; and every thing was done without delay, to place these hospitals upon the improved plan which had been ordered. The fine large

hospital of St. Thomar was cleansed, that of St. Bento was enlarged, by taking in more of it for the reception of the soldiers only; the regimental-surgeons and their assistants were made useful by their daily attendance, and reporting the number that were confined in the hospitals belonging to their several regiments. That indiscriminate mode of admission, which had been in use, was altered, and a system of cleanliness thereby secured, so that these hospitals, before the Marshal's next visit (which was shortly expected) were in a much better state, though not so perfect as time and perseverance might have made them, with the interposition of that authority which had supported me so far in the reform.

At this time too, the Almoxafires had received supplies of various kinds, which enabled them to add greatly to the comfort, as well as appearance of the hospitals; and likewise gave fresh encouragement to the Physico 'Mor and his attendance.

---

The movement of the British army towards the frontiers, shewed strong indications that the campaign would open early in the spring, as they passed

through Coimbra under the command of Sir John Sherbrooke. They were in general healthy, and seemed to have gained their former good appearance; but many of them, both officers and privates, were left here, with remitting fevers, which proved fatal to some of the men. There was as yet no hospital established for them in Coimbra, but a temporary one was opened for their reception immediately, in one of the convents above the city, where the sick were received, and attended by one of their own surgeons, who was there in charge of a detachment of artillery.

The Surgeon-General to the British army, found Coimbra a very commodious situation for the sick, and soon after established a general hospital for their reception, in the environs of the city, which would have proved a most excellent example for the natives, if time and opportunity could have been taken for the purpose.

The marching of the British army, and the establishing of the numerous staff belonging to it, made the city of Coimbra, at this time, a very interesting and busy scene, especially when it was considered, that most probably, they would, in a very short time, be opposed to the enemy, who,



with Massena at their head, was preparing to pass the frontiers of this country.

The Portuguese brigades, which had been, during the winter, in distant cantonments, were likewise drawing closer towards Coimbra, which appeared to be the central point from which both armies were to move.

Marshal Beresford again visited Coimbra, for the purpose of inspecting the troops preparatory to their taking the field, for which they were ordered to hold themselves in readiness.

Lord Wellington, as he passed through Coimbra, took the opportunity of reviewing the Portuguese army under Marshal Beresford ; which was indeed a day of great idolation to them, as report said. He was highly pleased with their appearance, and the rapid improvements they exhibited in their different evolutions.

Amidst these various engagements, his Excellency Marshal Beresford, did not forget once more to inspect these hospitals ; and in so doing, was pleased to express his satisfaction at the improved appearance of them altogether, as well as for the attention which had been paid to the orders he had before given about them.

His Excellency strongly recommended perseverance in the plan going on, and enjoined the Physico 'Mor, and his attendants, not to relax in their endeavours for further improving the state of their hospitals, which really now held out some prospect that they might be rendered useful to the army, at least at some future period.

The amendment which had been brought about in these hospitals, though they certainly tended much to the comfort of the sick, and had produced amongst them some appearance of order and regularity, yet were still highly improper for military hospitals: and nothing but an absolute separation of them from the general concern, and establishing the same system with which the British hospitals were managed, could effectually render them serviceable to the army.

Instructions had been received from the heads of the department at Lisbon, to their Physico 'Mor here, and additional bedding had been received, and other materials, which enabled him more fully to put in practice the improvements which had been suggested and approved by Marshal Beresford.

The civilians, who by that ill-conceived lenity

and indulgence, which had prevailed, and who had been suffered to linger in their beds, were removed into separate wards, and indeed presented such a scene of human misery, that would deter any one from such a monstrous and mistaken indulgence in future.

The floors were constantly cleaned and nuisances removed ; every soldier who could with propriety dress himself, did it at a suitable hour in the morning, and presented himself clean and wholesome to the visiting medico ; and every necessary convenience was prepared for him that no excuse might be offered ; with all this, there was too much appearance of slovenly irregularity, and too great a mixture of diseases, and it required constant attention to prevent their running again into confusion.

The sentries too were become more orderly and soldier-like at their different posts, where they were placed to enforce obedience ; and did not, as formerly, by their own misconduct, encourage rather than prevent it in the patients.

The regimental-surgeons had, by the Marshal's directions, been down to the Medical Board at Lisbon, to pass their examination, touching their



qualifications, &c., and such as were approved were re-instated in their regiments, and allowed to act in these hospitals amongst the soldiers of their particular corps. They also gave regular returns of their sick, which they visited daily ; by which some idea could be formed of the numbers, diseases, and probability of recovery, and the real effective state of the regiments ascertained ; so that every thing now, comparatively, began to assume in these hospitals, some degree of regularity and order ; and it was pleasing to observe, that in proportion as the soldier was abstracted from the civilians, and the necessity of his compliance with the orders enforced, how his manner were altered, and how his countenance expressed the satisfaction he experienced ; and, certainly, his complaints, whatever they were, did not undergo less attention from the surgeon or physician who attended him.

The recruits which came in daily, in numbers, continued to annoy us much, though separate wards were allotted for their reception ; but the miserable state they were in, required something more than mere hospital treatment to make them fit for soldiers.

This part of the service has been variously com-

mented on, by those who have considered the subject; and did indeed call for the most able and active opinions to regulate.

The mode of raising these recruits, did not appear to me so arbitrary considering the nature of the government, and the actual state of the country, as some authors have depicted. There certainly was a want of management of them, when forced into the service, in attempting to bring them forward before they had been properly clothed, and in putting them to the drill before they were sufficiently recovered from a long march, during which, they had most likely been badly fed, and their minds and bodies both ill-fitted to prepare them for the service; the consequence was, that they became sickly, and were objects for the hospital; and it was with the utmost difficulty they were afterwards brought into a state to undergo the necessary preparation, before they could be admitted in the ranks. This part of the service has been since accurately revised by Marshal Beresford, and regulations adopted to ensure success in future.

Desertions had become so frequent, and had increased to such an extent, that it was deemed necessary to check it early, and a few examples were

made, which it was said, produced the desired effect. In a young army about to take the field, this crime might have been productive of very serious consequences; when ever examples are necessary, they certainly should be such as would at once deter and prevent the repetition of the crime, by holding forth the enormity of it: lenient measures are known not to answer, and proves rather an inducement than otherwise: the more decided and peremptory, therefore, they are, the more merciful, and prevent a repetition of lesser punishments, which wounds the feelings more, and fail to answer the purpose intended by them.

In the other native hospitals, where the British staff-surgeons had been stationed, the same bad system prevailed, and for the same reason, the impossibility of forming the military arrangements with their civil institutions. Some attempt had been made at Thomar, but was found to infringe too much on the established customs, and was not pursued for any great length of time; for this reason, it may be presumed, if an Inspector had been introduced, he would not have been able to effect more than what had been done at Coimbra, without setting aside the laws established altogether.



His Excellency Marshal Beresford had directed more room to be given in one of the hospitals at Coimra, and for that purpose had ordered the resident priests to quit that part of the convent which they occupied, and which certainly could at this period be much more usefully employed, in accommodations for their sick; and by their arresting diseases, which threatened to spread and prove destructive to the army, in a most alarming degree.

The removal of these inhabitants was not accomplished without repeated remonstrances, and setting before them the absolute necessity of complying; and likewise representing the danger they exposed themselves to, by remaining, which last opinion, probably, had the most powerful effect, and induced them to yield obedience to the order.

The whole of the edifice which was very extensive was left open for the sick soldiers, except the library, which was separated by a strong partition, and to which they could, whenever they pleased, have free and uninterrupted access.

So certain was this arrangement to give umbrage to these priests, that the Physico 'Mor, de-

clined speaking to them on the occasion, and particularly requested me to be the bearer of the Marshal's orders: for so great and general a good it was but right that they should submit; but I had afterwards reason to believe they were not quite reconciled to the necessity.

Every thing now seemed to have been carried to the utmost extent of arrangement, which the Marshal deemed it proper to enforce, without actually altering the established laws of the country: it was highly probable his Excellency was waiting for the arrival of an Inspector from England to form the system, which he would sanction before he would attempt any further alteration.

At an inspecting visit to Coimbra, by General Hamilton, the latter end of January 1810, the General informed me that an Inspector had arrived, and as Marshal Beresford was then at Lisbon, great expectations were raised that a complete reformation might be formed, and that the duties I had been so arduously engaged in, might be brought to some regular and established plan.

An official letter from the Inspector a very short time after, not only strengthened that be-

lief, but announced that he was actually, by Marshal Beresford's orders, digesting a plan for that purpose.

(COPY.)

*"Lisbon, February 10, 1810.*

*"SIR,*

*"As I am at present employed, by order of  
" Marshal Beresford, in digesting a system of  
" hospital management for the army of this coun-  
" try, I have to request you will, at your earliest  
" convenience, favour me with any observations  
" on the subject which your local experience may  
" have enabled you to make. The most eligible  
" basis strikes me to be that of regimental or bri-  
" gade hospitals, wherever the troops are in fixed  
" quarters, to which the general hospital of the  
" country may afford relief, or prove a substitute  
" when the army takes the field ; but I shall be  
" most happy to receive your suggestions, either  
" on that subject, or any other that concerns the  
" health and welfare of the troops.*

*" I have the honor to be,*

*" SIR, &c. &c.*

*" (Signed) WM. FURGUSON.*

*" Inspector General Portuguese Hospitals."  
Staff-Surgeon Thomas, Coimbra.*



Of course no time was lost in answering the Inspector's letter, indeed the subject had been so long in contemplation, that I had little more to do than to transcribe what I had prepared for the Marshal's consideration, together with the system that appeared likely to remove the impediment that existed.

(ANSWER.)

*“Coimbra, February 19, 1810.*

“SIR,

“I take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, and am happy in communicating to you such observations which have occurred to me from time to time, during my attendance at the Portuguese hospitals at Coimbra.

“My introduction to this duty here was by no means flattering, and my services have been extremely limited and controuled; the executive part of the duty being vested solely in the civilians, physicians, and surgeons of this place, and who, naturally jealous of their prerogative, were not readily disposed to yield it up, or to co-operate with me, although his Excellency Mar-

shal Beresford, has, some time ago, issued his orders to that effect, and it has been merely with a seeming specious compliance with his order, that I have been permitted to come forward and interfere with them, though the Marshal himself seems to have acted very delicately towards these medicos, whom the Regency have thought proper to elect, and are by their laws established in their trust: as to the expenditures, and other internal regulations of that sort, I have never offered to interfere with them, and the Marshal has forbid me to do so. The diets of the hospital are under the direction of the Physico 'Mor entirely; and however disposed I might have been to animadvert upon, as been too profuse, they have been left to him, as the law of the country had ordained.

“ My attention has, therefore, been chiefly directed to the cleanliness of the place, and persons of the soldiers, which, from the absolute disregard to these particulars impressed me, as more essentially necessary than diet or medicine.

“ The care of the sick being entirely vested in civilians, regimental surgeons and their assistants, are become useless; I have endeavoured to bring them forward and to attend the sick of their re-

spective regiments, and be responsible for the state they are in \*.

“ Under such disadvantages you may imagine, Sir, little progress could be made, where customs and prejudices combine against every effort to produce any change, however salutary, and where even the Brigadier commanding here, could not assist me in my endeavours.

“ The consequences are, crowded hospitals beyond example, filth, sloth, and every thing but what a military hospital should be ; diseases of all kind mixed, and the whole of the bedding contaminated for want of exposure and separation from time to time, as the weather permitted.

“ With respect to the possibility of establishing hospitals here on a better footing I am clearly of opinion, that whatever plan may be adopted, it

---

\* At the time these institutions were adopted, there was a very excellent code of regulations, for the guidance of all the medicos, who were appointed to them, in time of peace as well as war -but since the commotions of the country, they seem to have been little attended to, if not lost sight of altogether.



should be distinct, and entirely unconnected, with the present system.

“ Hospitals on a similar establishment with the British, appear to me most likely to answer ; and as you observe, Sir, making these general hospitals, if possible, subservient to them, by sending the desperate and forlorn cases to them, and by selecting, occasionally, such convalescents from them, which may be likely to become effective.

“ In accomplishing such a regulation, the pay of a soldier should be continued \*, and a fund raised for his subsistence whilst sick, from such stoppages as may be judged adequate to that purpose.

“ Medicines, utensils, bedding, &c., must be furnished by the Government, and the entire charge of the sick committed to the regimental-surgeons and their assistants ; the British staff may then be employed with advantage ; and I should certainly prefer regimental hospitals, to avoid their running

---

\* By the regulations the soldier's pay ceases on his admission into the hospital, and he is subsisted at the expense of the Government as the civilians are. This expense may be avoided, as well as the ill consequences resulting from such a regulation.

into that confusion which these people are so apt to do, in spite of the most vigilant attention.

“ A plan of this kind has long since struck me as absolutely necessary, and a sketch of it I had drawn up, intending to present it to his Excellency Marshal Beresford, who, on visiting these hospitals, has, in a certain degree, amended the different nuisances and irregularities, herein complained of, at least for the present ; but enough yet remains to make the plan adviseable. I intended to have submitted it to his Excellency, but hearing you were arrived, Sir, I withheld it, judging it most proper to transmit it to you ; and shall be happy if there is any thing I have suggested which may assist you. You may depend upon me at all times, ready to second any system you may think necessary for the welfare of the troops.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ Sir, &c. &c.

“ (Signed) W. THOMAS,

“ Staff-Surgeon Portuguese Army.

“ *To the Inspector-General Portuguese  
Hospitals.*”

The Inspector's letter to me, a few days after receiving this answer, was very satisfactory, and convinced me that I had not laboured in vain,

and above all, that I had considered the matter very properly; it is too flattering not to insert it.

(COPY.)

*“Lisbon, 20th February, 1810.*

*“SIR,*

*“I was yesterday favoured with your letter, and its inclosures, which I this morning submitted to Marshal Beresford.*

*“His Excellency expressed himself to be highly pleased with the clear and perspicuous, though melancholy and true picture you have drawn of the Portuguese hospitals.*

*“If they are allowed to remain in their present state, the destruction of the Portuguese army must be inevitable, for I can look upon them in no other light than as hot-beds of contagion perpetually opening fresh sources of pestilence upon the troops.*

*“It is gratifying to find, that without previous communication between us, your sentiments and mine have been so much in unison respecting these hospitals, and the necessity of a reform, as the*



accompanying notes will point out to you \*, which had been written for some days, and was presented to Marshal Beresford, along with your perspicuous and practical illustration of the evil.

“ I am most happy to be thus assured, that in the reform which I have in contemplation, I may depend upon the zealous and cordial co-operation, arising out of the same motives, a thorough conviction of their necessity.

“ I have the honor to be,

“ SIR, &c. &c.

“ (Signed) WM. FURGUSON.

“ Inspector General Portuguese Hospitals.

“ *Staff-Surgeon Thomas,*  
*Coimbra.*”

These notes on the comparative advantages of the different hospitals, certainly did the Inspector great credit, and, doubtless, recommended him to the Marshal, for their perspicuous, yet comprehensive and intelligent manner they are conveyed.

---

\* Notes on the comparative advantages of regimental or brigade and general hospitals, as applicable to the Portuguese army.

## NOTES, &amp;c. &amp;c.

“ The *Regimental Hospital* when properly conducted, is the central hinge on which the health of the army depends, the first resource of the sick soldier, and the fountain of experience, respectability, and character to the medical officers.

“ In actual war, and during the rapid movements of troops, the sick must be left behind, and then *General Hospitals* are necessary ; but these ought never to be considered as permanent, but only as temporary expedients to meet the pressure of service, and in no respect essential, under ordinary circumstances, to the proper care of the sick.

“ If any exception be permitted to this rule, it ought to be in the keeping up the *Permanent General Hospitals* on a liberal footing, one at Lisbon the other at Oporto, for the reception of incurable and obstinate cases, or wounds requiring more than ordinary surgical care ; and these might further be made to serve the purpose of a school for military surgery.

“ The plan of a *General Hospital* should be

precisely that of the regimental on a more extended scale. It is impossible they can be well conducted, unless by medical officers of good education, who have acquired experience of military practice, with the knowledge of the soldier, his disease, temper, and habits, in *Regimental Hospitals*, and have been familiarized, with military regulations, from having served in the different graduations of military rank.

“ Even under the circumstances just mentioned, these hospitals, will always prove a great though a necessary evil, destructive of the effective strength of armies, for diseases are with difficulty cured wherever a large body of sick is aggregated together ; new contagions are generated, and discipline is imperfectly preserved, because the dread of immediate military punishment is removed. The soldier too often becomes infected with vicious and malingering habits, when no longer in the presence of his officer, and under the eye of his corps ; for the vicious and malingerers of the army are always found to skulk in general hospitals, and there to spread the contagion of bad example.

“ In all armies, therefore, the sick should never, under any circumstances, be sent to *General*



*Hospitals* whilst their regiments are present on the spot. To do otherwise must wound the professional feelings, and operate as a proclamation of idleness, and freedom from the responsibility to the medical staff of the corps ; deprive the sick soldier of his home, and prove further hurtful by the loss of time or change of treatment which the transferring him to the hands of strangers necessarily implies.

“ A soldier sent to a *General Hospital* is rarely restored to his corps during the campaign. The average duration of sickness in the *Regimental Hospital* is always less, and the mortality smaller, not from superior medical treatment in the last, but from the unavoidable loss of time, in transferring him to the first, at the beginning of his distemper, (always the most important period) the despondency induced by the presence of so many sick, the spectacle of death around him, and the less tender attendance which he is apprehensive of meeting, and too often does meet at the hands of hospital servants, who are unknown to, and therefore feel little interest in him.

“ Instead of collecting the sick of an army into one spot, it ought to be a rule to separate them as much as possible ; this prevents the gene-

ration of fresh contagion from its only source, undue accumulation of human effluvia, more particularly from bodies under a state of disease ; and accelerates recovery, by ensuring, in a superior degree, the advantages of ventilation, discipline, repose, and attendance.

“ It is still of greater consequence, promptly to separate the convalescent from the diseased.

“ According to the present system of the Portuguese army, the regimental medical staff, though numerous, far beyond what is found in other services, are of little immediate use to their corps, and must ultimately become altogether lost to their profession and the service, through pure want of practice ; and if the *General Hospitals* are to continue to receive the whole of their sick, one instead of seven would be more than sufficient for weekly health inspection ; the rest might be dismissed.

“ To conclude, were a plan of *regimental treatment* generally adopted amongst the Portuguese troops, it would, by cutting off the source, afford a radical remedy to the abuses and peculations which have so long prevailed in the fixed hospitals of the country, improve the professional

character of the medical staff, and strengthen the connection between the officer and the soldier ; who would then be taught to look up to, and depend upon, his official protector, in all situations.

“ (Signed.)            W. FURGUSON.

“ Inspector General of Portuguese Hospitals.”

These observations, which shew the very end and spirit of the regulations, by which the British military hospitals are conducted, and which would, if fairly appropriated to the Portuguese service, unquestionably have struck at the root of those abuses which existed, and have laid the foundation for the future plan, which would most essentially have added to the strength of their army, and have given comfort and convenience to their sick ; and what was extremely requisite, particularly at this junction, would have ensured economy, and relieved the state from a very burdensome and extravagant expense, which was entailed upon it, by pursuing their established plan. All these advantages were certainly in a train for adoption, and the system even carried still farther than the Inspector had as yet been able to pursue, for want of that practical knowledge of the Portuguese service, which was absolutely necessary for its completion.



The sources from which plans were to be formed to accomplish this great scheme of reformation, had not as yet, by him, been considered with a view to the practice of them, as appeared by a subsequent letter on the subject a few days after the receipt of the former.

(COPY.)

*“Lisbon, 24th February, 1810.*

“SIR,

“I have to request that you will, at your earliest convenience, furnish me with any form or forms, and composition of diet tables, which you think may be adopted to the sources of the country, and the habits of the sick, always keeping in view the grand objects of economy, comfort, abundance, and simplicity, for every class of patients in hospitals.

“I must also request that you will favor me with your opinion on the best form of sick returns, monthly and weekly, or for shorter periods, if these will better suit the purpose; the amount of stoppage that ought to be made against men in regimental or brigade hospitals, the mode of keeping books, or making returns of expen-

diture, or any other point relative to hospital finances.

“ Being comparatively a stranger in the Portuguese army, I possess few well-grounded notions of their *national service*, and wish to have the benefit of your local experience, before I lay down regulations on the above important points.

“ I have the honor to be,

“ SIR, &c. &c.

“ (Signed) WM. FURGUSON.

“ Inspector General Portuguese Hospitals.

“ *Staff-Surgeon Thomas,*  
*Coimbra.*”

(ANSWER.)

*Coimbra, 26th February, 1810.*

“ SIR,

“ I have to acknowledge your's of the 20th instant, with the accompanying notes, on the comparative advantages of *Regimental* and *General Hospitals*, as applicable to the Portuguese army, which demonstrate to a perfect conviction on my mind, the advantages of the former over the latter, particularly as they regard those at present existing in this country, and it is a great satisfac-

Forms of Diet, with the Actual Cost, including Washing, for One Day.

	No. 1, Whole Diet.	No. 2, Half Diet.	No. 3. Low Diet.	No. 4, Spoon Diet.
<b>BREAKFAST.</b>	One Pint of Gruel.	One Pint of Gruel.	Half a Pint of Gruel.	Rice Water with Sugar and Lemon Juice.
<b>DINNER.</b>	Half a Pound of Meat, and Half a Pint of Broth.	Four Ounces of Meat, and Half a Pint of Broth.	Quarter of a Chicken, Two Ounces of Rice, with Half a Pint of the Broth.	One Ounce of Rice, with Four Ounces of Chicken Broth three times a day.
<b>SUPPER.</b>	One Pint of Broth.	One Pint of Broth.	One Pint of Chicken Broth.	Rice, with Wine according to circumstances.
	One Pound of Bread for the whole day	Twelve Ounces of Bread for the whole day.	Twelve Ounces of Bread for the whole day.	
<b>ACTUAL COST.</b>	<i>Reas.</i> One Pound of Bread ..... 30 One Ounce of Oatmeal..... 10 Two Ounces of Milk..... 3 Half a Pound of Meat ..... 30 <hr/> 73 <hr/> 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ <i>d.</i> British.	<i>Reas.</i> Twelve Ounces of Bread ..... 23 Twelve Ounces of Gruel ..... 7 Four Ounces of Meat ..... 15 <hr/> 45 <hr/> 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>d.</i> British.	<i>Reas.</i> Twelve Ounces of Bread ..... 23 Half Pint of Gruel ..... 5 Quarter of a Chicken ..... 40 Two Ounces of Rice ..... 6 <hr/> 74 <hr/> 5 <i>d.</i> British.	<i>Reas.</i> Three Ounces of Rice..... 6 Sugar ..... 5 Lemons ..... 5 <hr/> 11 <hr/> 1 <i>d.</i> British.
Stoppages for four Men, four Vints each .....		320 Reas or 1 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> British.		
Actual Expenditure for one day, including Washing for one Shirt for each Man .....		240 Reas or 1 <i>s.</i> 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ <i>d.</i> British.		
Surplus .....		80 Reas or 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ <i>d.</i> British.		
The Gruel to consist of One Ounce of Oatmeal each Man, Two Ounces of Milk, and a little Salt. The Surplus will admit of Vegetables, and if necessary Wine, &c.				





tion to me to find my observations have induced me to form opinions which so perfectly coincide with your own.

“ I am likewise to acknowledge your letter of the 24th instant; and, in obedience to your wishes, have made immediate reference to such observations as have, from time to time, occurred to me respecting the forms for dieting the sick, as well as to the several other matters pointed out in your letters, which I herewith do myself the the honor of submitting to your consideration; as likewise a return of the sick of one of the regiments here, which form I have instituted, and which I receive regimentally twice a week from the regimental surgeon; it is probably not so comprehensive respecting the diseases as might be wished, but I meant it merely as a beginning, intending to enlarge the report as circumstances required, and as the regimental surgeons became familiarized with the practice.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ Sir, &c. &c.

“ (Signed) W. THOMAS,

“ Staff-Surgeon Portuguese Army.

“ *To the Inspector-General Portuguese Hospitals.*”

Having thus far contributed my endeavours towards the reform of these hospitals, I had only to wait until the Inspector could bring forward his digested plan to be put into practice, and to watch the still existing evils, and remove them, or at least, lessen them, as they appeared, and place every thing on the best footing I could, until the great scheme of reform was ready.

During this interval, unfortunately, the small-pox appeared, in two instances, amongst the recruits who were in the hospital, which did not alarm the Physico 'Mor in the manner I thought such an event would have done ; however, I lost no time in communicating the circumstance to the Inspector, who was still at Lisbon, that immediate steps might be taken to prevent its spreading : the vaccine fluid was forthwith sent, with orders from Marshal Beresford, to put it in practice without delay, and extend it through the brigades as generally as possible.

Vaccination was instantly commenced, but I learnt that this necessary precaution had been previously adopted through the country, and was the reason why the Physico 'Mor felt so little apprehension, when the variolous contagion was dis-



covered; very few indeed were found even amongst the young recruits who had not been subjected to vaccination, and that the Physico-Mor was correct in his conclusion on the subject was evident, since the disease was confined to the two cases first discovered, though these were of the confluent sort, and would, in all human probability, have spread the contagion very rapidly, had not the practice of vaccination arrested it.

This was a most satisfactory instance of the good, which might be expected by the extension of the practice of vaccination, and may yet tend to recommend the perseverance as much as any fact that can be brought forward in support of its success.

If it could not be positively said to have been, in this instance, the actual preservation of this young army, it cannot be denied but that it stopped the progress of this dreadful disease, which, at this very particular period, would have been very alarming: an epidemic of this kind breaking out in the crowded state of the hospitals amongst a number of young recruits from the country, and thus added to the epidemic fever which was not entirely subdued, and this too in a populous and large city, must have ex-

cited great alarm, and must doubtless have retarded the preparations going forward for accelerating the ensuing campaign.

His Excellency Marshal Beresford soon after this arrived at Coimbra, and was entirely engaged in forming arrangements for the movement of his Portuguese army towards the frontiers, which appeared likely to be the spot where the campaign would be opened ; this accounted for the silence of the Inspector.

Marshal Beresford seemed for the present, at least, to have postponed the further consideration respecting the hospitals, and was giving his attention to the strengthening the corps of brigades, which had been assembled in Coimbra, and round it ; and was daily inspecting some of them as they arrived and passed through the city, and in preparing them to take the field \*.

The regiments were in general very strong and healthy, and none but such were allowed to pro-

---

\* In this arduous part of the service I had the honor of being particularly engaged, being the only staff-surgeon at Coimbra.

ceed ; some few who appeared not equal to the duties were rejected, and retained for less arduous service.

It was evident these preparations were the principal objects which now engaged attention, and which extended far and near ; for by a letter from the Inspector, then at Lisbon, and who had been some time silent, he seemed no longer to be pursuing the plan for the relief of these fixed hospitals, but was collecting, and about forwarding equipments to Coimbra, to enable Marshal Beresford's army to take the field ; and by a letter from the Inspector the latter end of March. I was informed that materials and necessary equipments of various sorts, were on the road to Coimbra, consigned to me. Mules, for the conveyance of them, were to be delivered to me, for the purpose of distributing them to the different regiments and brigades, as they should arrive and pass through Coimbra. The Physico 'Mor had likewise similar intimation from the Medical Board at Lisbon, who was authorized to assist me in this service.

These equipments, which were on the most liberal and extensive plan, were accordingly re-



ceived, and delivered to the respective regiments and brigades, agreeably to the instructions sent to that effect \*, and they were occasionally paraded, and those who were selected to take charge of them were practised in the loading and unloading the mules, to make them expert in the service, which, as novices in the business, was as necessary as any other part of the duties to which a soldier might be called upon to perform.

Every thing now seemed to be in perfect readiness to move, the Marshal with his staff quitted Coimbra, as it was supposed for a few days, but he did not return ; an order arrived very shortly after for one of the brigades in Coimbra to march forward to the frontiers ; two regiments under the

---

\* These equipments were, with very few exceptions, from England—two or three cases of the surgical instruments were from the native manufactories, and they were of most excellent workmanship, but they were made after the old established forms, which by the more modern practice had rendered absolute—however they were not rejected being few in numbers, and were distributed to their own surgeons, who probably were more in the habit of using them, than those of the modern ones ; and besides, it might have given offence if any objection had been made to them.

command of Colonel Sutton\*, accordingly left that place, and proceeded to one of the forts near Almeida, on the frontiers, which they were to garrison.

Immediately afterwards the whole of the Portuguese troops, which formed the brigade at Coimbra, and had been trained under the command of Brigadier-General Campbell and his officers, followed them on the same route, and I was preparing to accompany them; but, on the day previous to their marching, a special order from the Marshal, ordered me to remain to superintend the hospitals and sick of the army in that quarter as before.

(COPY.)

*“Coimbra, April 28, 1810.*

“SIR,

“I have the honor to inform you, that I have received Marshal Beresford’s commands that you

---

\* Now Sir Charles Sutton, an officer whose suavity of manner had endeared him to his officers and men, and whose conduct in the field afterwards, recommended him for distinction at home.

do, for the present, remain to superintend the hospitals and sick of the army in this quarter.

“The troops being about to march, the guards and sentries of the regular regiments will, of course, be taken off; but you will be pleased to make application to the Magistracy of the town, in the name and by the order of Marshal Beresford, for every species of assistance that you may want, applying for ordinaries, (if militia soldiers cannot be procured,) to attend the hospitals; and you will be so good as to state, through this office, for his Excellency’s information, any difficulties which you may conceive to be of sufficient consequence to forward to the Marshal.

“I have the honor to be, &c.

“ (Signed.)

H. HARDINGE,

“ Acting Quarter-Master.

“ *Staff-Surgeon Thomas, Coimbra.*”

This movement of the troops from Coimbra, though not unexpected, was certainly sudden, and left our hospitals in an awkward situation, especially as the sentries began to know their duty, and both within and without kept the place in tolerable order.

However no time was lost on making the appli-



cation to the Magistracy in obedience to the order, which was attended to by them with all possible despatch ; and, in a few hours, a sufficient number of the city militia assembled at the hospitals for instruction, but from the undisciplined state of them, and their total ignorance of the duty required, they threw us into confusion, which was not very readily restored to any thing like order\*.

The attendance likewise of the regimental-surgeons, and their assistants, were missed, as they had of late been very regular in their attention ; in short we were once more thrown into a state of confusion, which threatened to place us on the same disastrous footing we were in when the Marshal first inspected these hospitals.

The convalescents, indeed, which had been inspected and discharged to their respective regi-

---

\* Whether these men were actually militia, I know not, for I had never before heard of them ; it was most likely, from their appearance, that they were merely bodies of men who, occasionally, were called upon to assist the Magistrates upon any emergency. They altogether formed a very motley appearance, some having swords, some muskets, and others pikes, and seemed to be formed under no discipline whatever.

ments, previous to the marching of the brigades, gave some room, and now stopped the daily admission of fresh patients which had constantly presented themselves, so that there was an unusual appearance of quietude as well as vacancy in the wards.

The public mind was not a little agitated in Coimbra, upon the departure of these troops, and various were the opinions excited as to the event; the common, and by far the most general, was derived from the reports which had been a long while circulated, respecting the immense number of veteran and tried troops, under the command of one of the most able and popular generals the French could boast of, that composed the French army assembled on these frontiers, and were preparing to advance.

These young and inexperienced troops, were supposed absolutely unable to face them, and that a retreat was inevitably to be expected; whilst others, who had been accustomed to think on the events themselves, which had happened, and who reasoned deliberately, had prepared to wait with patience, confidently relying on the abilities of the commander-in-chief, and the firmness of his British army, who had before so effec-

tually rescued them from situations equally critical as the present ; none had probably taken into consideration the possibility of those circumstances which really did happen, to defeat and waste this numerous and extensive enemy, and which the great abilities of the commander-in-chief contrived to turn to his own immortal glory, and the complete triumph of the allied armies.

---

The removal of these native troops, not only from Coimbra, but from every other quarter where they had been collected, actually produced what had been so long wished for, and had been recommended, a separation of the sick soldier from the civil hospitals of the country, the good effects of which were immediately felt—the medical men found themselves released from a responsibility which had been brought upon them, without having any authority to meet it, or indeed without any knowledge of the means by which it might be supported ; it was quite out of their sphere, and embarrassed them in the execution of those duties which they only felt themselves competent to. The British medical-staff likewise were, for the present, disengaged from those insurmountable difficulties which had rendered their



services nearly useless ; but it was yet conjectured that the arrival of the Inspector amongst them, would completely set all these matters in future at rest.

Not that these hospitals at Coimbra were at this time entirely abandoned, for it was still intended to make them occasionally useful to the military, and as the route of this army was through that part of the country which the river Mondago flows, it was judged very favorable for returning the sick to the hospitals of Coimbra, and thus easily keeping the army free from such incumbrances, and the brigades effective. The weather for the first few days and nights after the troops commenced their march was unfavorable, particularly in the evenings and nights ; the rain poured down in torrents, and some few who had fallen sick were returned down the river in boats ; but the weather clearing up, and as they proceeded further from Coimbra, the indisposition proving slight, as they gained their respective quarters, returns of sick troops to these hospitals, by this conveyance ceased.

Early in May the Inspector arrived at Coimbra, and finding these hospitals comparatively in a better state than he had reason to expect from the

reports I had made of them, flattered himself that he could without much difficulty, still farther accomplish their improvement, and at once remove those objectionable practices which were yet too many and too evident to pass unobserved, he therefore volunteered to take the charge of them on himself, and even assured me that in the course of a few days I should see the difference, and be witness to the alterations he should effect in them.

Whether it was observing my health, which was materially affected by the constant attention I had paid to the service, and the daily exertions I had been subjected to, induced him to make this offer, or that he really thought he could thus suddenly bring about the improvements he had promised himself to produce, I certainly was very glad to avail myself of the opportunity to relax in my attendance, and to pay some attention to my own health.

After a weeks' trial, all these sanguine hopes of improvement vanished, and he candidly acknowledged that, with all his exertions, he could make no impression on them; therefore, despairing of success, he gave them up, and proposed a tour down the river Mondago, (where it runs through the

country about twelve leagues, then empties itself into the sea.) for the purpose of exploring that part of the country for a suitable spot, where he might establish one or more hospitals, independant of those at Coimbra, and still hold the advantages which it was supposed that river gave, for transporting the sick during the ensuing campaign.

It was necessary to reconnoiter the country on both sides of the river, and a boat gave us this opportunity, though from the awkward and unskillful manner of manageing it, the passage was tiresome, although convenient enough for our purpose, as we could readily land at any spot which appeared likely to answer the intention, several of which presented themselves soon after we left Coimbra, amongst the villages on the south-side of this river ; but, the banks were very marshy, and the ground, for some distance behind, flat and liable to the overflowing of the river. For a mile or more the country rises with a gradual ascent, which was beautifully fertile, and gives to the villages and country-houses, that are thickly scattered on the heights a very pretty appearance, and by which a good dry road from Coimbra passes. The inhabitants in them are healthy hereabouts, and do not at this distance feel any ill-consequences from the marshy grounds below, though



they were certainly an insurmountable objection to the forming an hospital, especially where healthier situations might, on further search, be found.

Excepting the distant view of these villages and country-houses, there was nothing at all interesting in this part of the Mondago, though of great poetic fame; the banks on each side are so flat, and the river was so low at this time, that if the weather had not been extremely fine, we might have shuddered with the damp and cold which they produced; and although our progress was slow, the boatmen had not sufficient skill to prevent our being entangled in the marshes, or our being annoyed by the pendant branches of the willow, which every now and then delayed us.

Nothing had as yet sufficiently attracted our notice, on either side of this river, which could answer the purposes for hospitals. The day was far spent, and we had not proceeded much above half way to Figaro, the place we intended to reach before night: the Mondago is here lost in the sea, and it was supposed the shipping might be employed at this place for transporting, not only the sick, but likewise the stores for the army, as

well as for embarking the troops, if occasion should make it necessary.

About seven or eight leagues from Coimbra, on the north-east side of the river, stands a promontory, with a small village at the bottom called Montè Moor ; the name bespeaks the origin of it, being one of those antient remains of a strong castle, which these warlike people had formerly erected, and similar structures are observed over this part of the Peninsula, which would induce one to believe, they had lived, and stretched themselves over this country into separate states or tribes.

This old fort, which is very extensive, must have contained a numerous body of these people, and seemed capable of holding out a long siege against an enemy, as war was carried on in those rude and barbarous times. The evening was advancing apace when we approached this castle, we determined, therefore, to go on shore at this place, and not to proceed farther until the next morning.

The Mondago, which runs immediately before this castle, was much wider than in any part we had passed, and the current was stronger ; and as it frequently overflows its banks here, leaves them

swampy, which makes it very unwholesome for the inhabitants, especially for that part where the village is low and stands near the river : but in the buildings above, especially those which are within the walls of the castle, the inhabitants are said to be much healthier and of a better order of people, and are situated above the reach of that miasma which occasionally proves so destructive to the poorer people, who live more exposed in the huts and small houses below, immediately on the banks of the river.

Having, by the assistance of the Juès de Fores, secured ourselves for the night at the houses of two respectable friars, we had just time, before it was to dark, to take a hasty survey of the interior remains of this remarkable castle.

There was within it a few small places which were inhabited, the light to which was only from the door, and holes in the walls originally formed for that purpose.

The ascent from the bottom to the summit was steep and narrow, and these passes might have been easily defended from any besiegers that might have, in those days, assailed them. There appeared to have been many passages about the



place, but they were now worn out, and could not be readily traced through the mouldering walls which time had levelled to them.

Conduits of stone for water were still evident, but now choaked up with earth, or the dilapidated ruins of the castle, which had fallen into them.

It certainly was a place, well deserving enquiry, and would have admitted of much farther examination, if time and opportunity had permitted.

Although this place and several others of like antiquity, are supposed to have been built by the Moors or Saracens, the Aborigines of this part of the Peninsula, it may be doubted whether the Romans after them were not the people to whom the credit ought to be given.

Their aqueducts, of which there are several in this country, are acknowledged to be theirs, and said to rival any thing of the kind which modern Europe can boast of for originality of design, and which remain perfect models for their imitation: these people seem to have possessed the very singular art of converting every thing,

which nature had thrown before them, to their own immediate purpose; thus the stones, the marble, and every other production of the kind, were employed by them on the spot, and they seem to have readily found the means of working these materials to the best advantage; wherever productions of this kind presented themselves they did not let them remain useless, but immediately converted them to some useful or ornamental purpose.

The fever which is known to prevail here, and all along the banks of the Mondago, from Coimbra to Figaro where it falls into the sea, is the bilious remittent fever, a species of fever recognized wherever the inhabitants are situated in low marshy grounds, especially near the sea; the miasma, from which stagnant soil seems to be more active than any other, and the degrees of heat to which they may be exposed, seems materially to determine the excess of this fever, and to spread its influence.

Other circumstances which, from situation, peculiarity of climate, and other intervening casualties, have a strong tendency to change the reality of these fevers, and to perplex the enquiry as to its originality and its tendency.

In the West Indies, where the causes of it are known to bring it forward in its most active and destructive form, excessive heat acting upon constitutions predisposed to febrile inflammation, and aggravated by the sudden change, and which, by diet, seem to be the great and primary causes of it in that country.

Dr. Chisholme, a practitioner of much repute in that climate, near thirty years ago published an account of it ; and attributed the cause of it at that time to infection which arose in a cotton ship, bringing slaves from Africa ; but at the same time describes the part of the country where it first appeared, to be very congenial to its influence from the damps and succeeding heats which supervened ; but although he attaches actual contagion to it in the first instance, he brings no proof of its being spread by simple contact, but that it became epidemic in that part of the country where it broke out, from the atmosphere, which was favorable for the purpose.

He found large doses of the submuriate of mercury, particularly useful, not only in evacuating the redundancy of vitiated bile in the first instance, but by continuing it even to ptyalism, it proved the most effectual antifebrifuge, by removing the



spasmodic action of the system, particularly in those biliary vessels, which were in a most violent manner excited; and this mode of treatment was persisted in without fear, notwithstanding that extreme debility which at times seemed to defy every means which could be suggested.

That active inflammation exists in the highest degree cannot be doubted, but the extreme debility which it so early produces, in general, forbids the practice of bleeding, and in all cases render it very doubtful.

Dr. Chisholme tried it, but was very doubtful whether it could be often used, though he acknowledges the necessity of it, was often apparent; there was a decision in his practice, tice, for the most part, in these cases, which was very satisfactory, and was very much wanted at this time.

In Gibaralter this fever has been since equally severe in its attacks and equally fatal in its termination: the cause was attributed to the state of the air, the south-east winds which blew from the Levant, and brings with them a heavy dense atmosphere, which hangs in amasing thick fogs on the tops of the mountain, that overhangs the gar-

rison and town below : but then, it must be observed, these winds from the Levant were experienced here long before this epidemic fever was known to prevail ; and when the garrison was notorious for being most healthy ; but this garrison had at that time comparatively few inhabitants, except the soldiers who were employed on duty in it. The town was then not so thronged, and the garden grounds within the garrison, if any were allowed, were kept in a better state, and did not produce those noxious exhalations, which are very justly observed to be no small excitement to those fevers, which have prevailed there.

The crowded state of the town, filled with all sorts of people, whose customs and habits must prove, in an extraordinary degree, excitements, and cannot fail to increase and spread an epidemic whenever it may appear.

It is to this crowded and pent-up state of the populace, that the idea of contagion must be strictly applied for that, independent of the original fever, which in itself has not contagious miasma in it, the circumbent atmosphere is the primary cause, and will act more or less uniformly, on all constitutions ; and this was really the fact when the fever raged in this garrison ; for no au-

thenticated cases were produced that proved the fever was communicated by immediate contact with an infected person, but that this violent epidemic might have been occasionally spread by the effluvia from some of these crowded houses where it had raged, may be true; and that the same excitement may have had great tendency to make it contagious, is a very probable conjecture; wherever malignant symptoms appeared they must have been generated from causes independent of the fever, for many were the proofs which determined the fever incapable of spreading itself in the first instance.

This fever at Walcheren, was in its attack not so immediately by active inflammation the first attack of it was more insidious than in the warmer climates, but certainly not less destructive amongst the troops; this might induce a belief that it was a different sort of fever, but the progressive states of it, and the means resorted to, prove it only the same disease, though generated and brought into action by less active and exciting causes. It was bilious and remittent, and required similar means in the on-set of the disease to resist it, but it gave more time to execute them, which was certainly an advantage, although no



great progress could be obtained so long as they continued within the sphere of that atmosphere which had caused it.

This fever proved very destructive to the troops employed on that expedition, and in the few months they were on it, created such congestion in the abdominal viscera, which are, for the most part, observed only in very long protracted cases, at home, and where the disease had for years been known to harass the constitution; and which for years after the recovery from febrile attacks, remained unaltered by any means which could be devised: time, probably, might have effected what medicine could not.

Many years ago I had occasion to observe this fever in a village in England, which was epidemic for several successive years in the autumn, but in no instance within my knowledge did it prove contagious after their removal from the situation where it was epidemic. It was caused by its low and damp situation, which the poor villagers were unable to protect themselves from, by sufficient fuel or good diet: the attack was slow, progressive, but uniformly the same; scarce a family in the village escaped, and a whole family was often down with it at one time, which required

assistance from the more fortunate and the wealthy, but none of these caught the disease by their intercourse with the infected.

Nature often produces a crisis about the tenth day, by hæmorrhage from the nose, which carried off several distressing symptoms, such as pain in the head, want of sleep, &c &c.; but judging from the pulse, which was quick and weak, and from the countenance, which indicated great debility, I never felt myself authorized in bleeding any, the propriety of which I have often since questioned. Submuriate of mercury was very effectual in early stopping its progress.

I had an opportunity, in the year 1795, of attending to this fever in one of its most exaggerated forms; it was in the Isle of Shippey, a situation of all others in England the most likely to favor an epidemic of this sort; which was almost equal in attack and violence to one of the same sort in the West Indies or at Gibraltar.

It happened in two militia regiments which were encamped in that island, and, although the cause of it may be attributed to the damp soil, and thick foggy atmosphere which prevails there at the latter end of the summer months, there

were such a combination of circumstances, which, at this time, heightened the fever beyond what is generally observed in England, that they deserve particular notice.

The two regiments were encamped early in the summer of that year; they were strong and healthy, as indeed the militia regiments were in general, from the great care and attention which was paid to them. The encampment was not far from the garrison of Sheerness, and about an hundred yards from the banks of the Thames; it was surrounded by deep trenches to draw off the moisture, and the better to secure the men, bell-tents were provided by Government, each tent holding twelve men, round the centre pole of which hammocks were slung to keep them from the ground, an experiment, which, though intended for the best of purposes, and certainly evinced the greatest attention on the part of Government, for the safety of the men, did actually prove one great cause of increasing the fever; for the men thus inclosed in their hammocks, and wrapped up in a blanket, were kept in a continual state of perspiration during the night, and the fogs which penetrated through the walls of them, together with the exhalations from the ground, could not fail of producing the worst consequences.



These regiments were not at this time kept to their usual discipline of parades, and practice in their manœuvres, but were employed in throwing up entrenchments and forming the works which the late Duke of Richmond had planned, and were completing under his directions, in which duty the men were through the day exposed to the sun in that marshy ground; and in spite of the vigilance of the superintending officers, would occasionally be found sleeping in those unhealthy situations.

The water which supplied this encampment was taken from a well about half a mile distant from it; it was very pure and good, and had been formerly constructed for the use of the garrison only, but with the addition of two thousand men, it was very inadequate to the purpose, and the constant labor it required, would occasionally leave the encampment very scantily supplied; which induced the men to put up with water from the stagnant ditches, and which they would use upon all occasions.

The summer past without any thing very particular occurring, except that it was a very dry one, and the thermometer rose to an unusual height, until about the latter end of August, when signs

of indisposition amongst the men began to appear which were taken for agues; but the rapid increase of them, and the peculiarity of the symptoms soon induced a suspicion that they were more than of an ordinary nature.

The fogs, night and morning, were now excessive, and the heat of the tents indurable: the men were unable, at times, to rise from their hammocks, and the attacks became so frequent and sudden, that it was quite alarming.

The men, without any previous indisposition, would, whilst about their usual employments, suddenly fall senseless, and remain so some hours, the first I saw in that state struck me it was from intoxication, and should certainly have concluded it was so, but from the positive assurance of those around him; however, the frequent occurrence of it in both regiments, and the succeeding events, soon convinced me of the reality of the disease.

Bleeding, under the circumstances which presented themselves, could hardly be dispensed with, though the propriety of it was questioned, in the progress of the disease, and as the attacks became less urgent, which soon happened after we had broke up the encampment, and the

men were removed into quarters, though the type of the fever was not materially altered until the spring came on, when it began to assume more decided symptoms of an intermittent.

The termination of these fevers was not less remarkable than the first appearance of them; after continuing through the winter in a more or less aggravated state, which kept the regiment totally unfit for duty, in the month of January following, the fever began to subside, which might be attributed to the situation it was then placed in, at Chatham\*; some critical terminations were then observed to take place, by suppuration in the paratides, and large carbuncles sloughing very largely, but many more were from suppurations in the adilla; these severally produced very perfect cures, and relieved the constitution without resorting to the use of tonics, for any great length of time, but they reduced the men considerably. Some fell into a dropsy, which were very tedious in recovering; two or three of these terminations, after many months, proved fatal. The more

---

\* By favor of General Fox, who then commanded at Chatham, a wing of the hospital in those barracks was opened to us.



general termination was by perspiration, all of which were accompanied with intermittents, which harrassed them a long while : in the spring of this year they were removed from Chatham into the interior of the country, which was greatly conducive to their recovery, but the state they were in did not a little alarm the towns where they were quartered : for the men were still subject to dreadful perspiration ; but by keeping them out in the air through the day, and as their strength was restored, removing them frequently, the regiment was restored to health, during the summer, by a long march into the north, where they became strong and capable of undertaking any duty required of them.

---

Early next morning we left this curious but unhealthy spot, for it was not at all calculated for an hospital, and proceeded to Figaro, a small but convenient town, on the extremity of the Mondago, opening into the sea. As we approached it, the low and marshy grounds on each side the river were flooded considerably, which could not be from the rains, they had ceased some time, but was occasioned by the reflux of the river when it met the tide, together with a north-

west wind, which often set in with great violence at this particular spot.

At Figaro we were equally disappointed, though there had been an hospital established with a view to the shipping, which, it was thought, might be employed with advantage in expediting sick troops, but there was a barrier about a mile from the shore, which, at times, prevented any intercourse, and likewise detained any vessel that might have passed it ; this intention was therefore given up, and we again fathomed the Mondago by the same conveyance which brought us down ; but as we had explored the country without finding any place proper for our intention, we had only to exercise our own patience, and employ our own ideas during the day, the whole of which was spent on the river, before we reached Coimbra.

This river, though one of the most celebrated in the country, on account of their poet Camoens, who found sufficient subject here for his genius to work upon, afforded very little variety, as the banks on each side continued flat and marshy, which, if the weather had not been very fine, and the sun shining with uncommon fervour, would have made one shudder ; indeed it was evening before we

were on shore, and as the sun declined, the difference was very sensibly felt.

The Mondago may, nevertheless, farther up the country, be supposed to have its beauties, since it has been celebrated by the greatest poetic genius of the country, Camoens, who was likewise famed as a great and enterprising voyager, and sailed to the East Indies, but was shipwrecked somewhere about the Madagascar coast, not unjustly called by these navigators the Coast of Storms. He is said to have written his *Luciad* during his passage on these seas, and that he swam on shore with this poem in his hand (the manuscript it may be supposed), which he had been engaged upon when he suffered this accident.

I could not help contrasting one of his poems\*

---

\* His minor poems, the subject of which are various, are very poetical, and were probably written when Camoens was young, and while a student at the University of Coimbra; these poems have been since translated with great taste and spirit by Lord Strongford, who seems to have done them great justice, and if not equal to the original, are probably as nearly so as the English translation would admit, the Portuguese language being esteemed very beautiful, and with such a genius as Camoens, may be supposed excellent.



with an author of our own country, in which the subjects are somewhat similar. Doctor Johnson, whose name ought not to be mentioned as an author but with the greatest admiration, when on his tour to the Hebrides, inscribed a very pretty Latin ode to his friend and admirer Mrs. Thrale : the thoughts in each have a great similitude, and the stanzas run nearly in equal metre. They are equally creditable to both, and shew that where there is genius, the subject, or the surrounding scenery, is of little consequence, the one could make himself a poet on the marshy banks of the Mondago, and the other when he was labouring over the barren mountains of Scotland, was not the less animated in grateful recollections to his patron, who was not a little proud of boasting such a token of his remembrance to her.

On leaving the boats the bells, at one of the large churches, were ringing one of their loudest clangors. The bells here are not of that soft and musical tone which we are accustomed to hear in England ; they are hung low and are open to the street, and calculated for noise, to alarm and rouse the attention to some sudden event, as fire, but they do not express joy, or portend any melancholy event as with us ; and are, therefore, from their loud and monotonous clangor, rather

unpleasant. By the time we reached the church they had ceased, and the procession of a funeral gave us to understand what this peol had announced: foremost came a man tinckling a small hand bell, then followed some friars, two and two, next was the corpse of a female, borne on a bier, which by the richness of the dress\*, denoted it was no ordinary personage.

It was a female, rather advanced in years; the face was exposed, but the whole person clothed in a superb vest of black velvet, from the face to the feet, down the centre of which was a very broad gold lace; the hands were exposed, and seemed ornamented with rings and other trinkets; on the feet were black velvet shoes.

After the bier followed the relatives, dressed in

---

\* It is the custom in this country after the demise of a person, to dress them in the usual manner, or costume, in which they had been accustomed to appear when alive, and for their relatives and friends to visit and take a farewell view of them. They do not inter them as we do in wood, but are conveyed to the grave in the costume they were exhibited in after their demise. The costly apparel and trinkets with which they are at that time covered, are by the sexton, or man in office, stripped from them when deposited in the earth, and the body left covered by a suitable vestment.

the suitable mourning of the country; the procession turned into the church, and with it an amazing concourse of spectators, who on approaching the grave which was in the church, fell on their knees, and one of the ministers began the service, which was but short, when the body, dressed in all this finery, was deposited in the grave, and a large black cloth was thrown over the whole; after which, a man who appeared to act as sexton, descended under the covering and remained in the grave some minutes, the minister praying and the people still on their knees. When the man came from under the cloth the prayers ended and the people got up: the cloth was then removed and he began to fill up the grave; which done, with a large wooden mallet, such as the paviors use in this country, he proceeded to ram down the grave with all his might. To return the body to the earth from whence it sprung, was a ceremony which was natural to every body, but thus to pound it to dust, was an operation not very congenial to the feelings of a stranger who was unaccustomed to witness it.

The people had now followed the priest to the altar at the end of the church, which was most superbly illuminated, and they were performing mass; which, with the devotion of the people,



was a very impressive scene, and certainly excited similar ideas in every one, of whatever persuasion he might have been bred in. Nothing can be more sublime than the service appointed on these occasions in our own church, when read with a proper devotion, especially if accompanied with the solemn cathedral music, which once heard can never be obliterated from the mind.

---

As the troops were now all removed from Coimbra, no means were taken to mend the state of these hospitals, with any intention to convert them to military purposes, and they again became only asylums for the sick civilians, who were of course, under the care of their own medics, that had been appointed to attend to them.

The distance which the troops had by this time marched from Coimbra, and the frequent movements to which they were now subject, made it impossible these hospitals could any longer be convenient to them, upon all occasions; it became necessary, therefore, to form temporary hospitals on the spot wherever they were, which, though ineffective, and only calculated to answer

the present purposes, were made as little objectionable as circumstances would admit.

After the commencement of the retreat of the allied armies from the frontiers, and the several engagements which took place, it was necessary that the wounded should be removed to these general hospitals, but under the same objections and inconveniencies as before ; indeed they could not now be dispensed with, as there was not time to substitute any other, on a better plan, they were therefore from necessity made use of, when the allied armies were on that memorable retreat from the frontiers towards Lisbon, which eventually led the enemy to their destruction, and afterwards as they again returned, until they had completely driven them out of the country ; and Marshal Beresford led them triumphantly back to their own homes.

There was now time to digest the plan proposed, and these general hospitals were, after a time, given up, and regimental ones were established, according to the British plan, which are now brought to a state of perfection equal to our own, and with the same views to economy, are found capable of maintaining their

sick under similar advantages, without additional expence to the country.

This is one of the many benefits which have accrued to them from the war, under British auspices, having relieved the nation from an enormous superfluous expence which they were not any longer able to sustain; and being by these means enabled to maintain the sick of their army upon an effectual plan, without burdening themselves or interrupting the discipline of their army, or hazarding the destruction of it altogether.

---



## CONCLUSION.

---

IT is impossible to contemplate the eventful history of this country, without wondering how it has been able to withstand the various revolutions to which it has been exposed ; and without being surprised that so small a tract of the Peninsula has been able to maintain its independance for so long a period, from the earliest ages of Gallic barbarism. to the present time ; yet, notwithstanding the determined perseverance of the people, they could not have effected it, but for the foreign assistance which they were forced to resort to from time to time ; and Great Britain has, at all times, been one of the foremost to encourage her in these patriotic and praise worthy struggles. But even these struggles must have been made in vain, had not the natural resourses which abound here, enabled her to bear up against the attempts which were opposed to her.

This last grand alliance with Great Britain, independant of the great national object, in which all Europe were concerned, was in a particular manner serviceable to them, in shewing them how to bring forward those great resourses with which Portugal abounds, and, by the force of example, they were instructed how to employ them to the best advantage.

Which it is to be hoped their natural good sense and policy, may induce them to improve still more; and that Portugal, possessing so many inducements in herself, and so happily situated, may after no great length of time, whether visited from motives of commerce, for pleasure, or for health, be enabled to vie with her continental neighbours, if not to surpass them, in those natural advantages for which they have hitherto claimed, and have, consequently, enjoyed the preference.

THE END.

---

## ERRATA.

---

*The Editor is sorry to observe that several typographical errors have escaped correction, which it is hoped the indulgent reader will excuse.*

---

- Page 37—*read* Lierea for Liyrea.  
—— 37—*read* Lamego for Lemego.  
—— 37—*read* Coimbro for Coimbra.  
—— 39—*read* Mantuan for Mantun.  
—— 126—*read* Montego for Mondago.  
—— 129—*read* Fiquero for Figaro.
-















